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TO THE READER.

ONe of the ſweeteſt refreſhing mercies of God, to his New England People, amidſt all their wilderneſs-tryals, and ſtraits, and ſorrows, wherewith they at firſt conflicted in thoſe ends of the earth, hath been their Sanctuary-enjoyments, in the beauties of holineſſe, where they have ſeen and met with him whom their ſoules love, and had familiar and full converſe with him, above what they could then enjoy in the land from whence they came. This is that that hath ſweetned many a bitter Cup to the remnant of *Iſrael*. The Lord alone led him, and there was no ſtrange God with him, was ſaid concerning Iſrael of old, and this was accounted mercy enough when he led them into a land where no man dwelt, and which no man paſſed thorough. What God hath done for New-England in this reſpect, and what their Sanctuary mercies be, thou haſt here a taſte, though but a taſte. Theſe notes may well be thought to be leſſe accurate, than if the Author himſelf had publiſhed them, and to want ſome poliſhments and trimmings, which it were not fit for any other to adde; however thou wilt find them full of uſefull

truths, and mayest easily discern his Spirit, and a Spirit above his own breathing in them.

Concerning the Author; it were worth the while to write the story of his life.

It is needlesse to speak in his commendation, His works praise him in the gates. They that know him, know he had as real apprehensions of the things of God, and lived as much with God, and with his own heart, and more than the most of Christians do. He had his education at Immanuel-College in Cambridge. The Conversion and Change of his heart was wrought betimes when he lived in the University, and enjoyed Dr. Prestons Ministery, whereby God had the very best and strength of his parts and years for himself. When he was first awakened to look after Religion, having before swam quietly in the stream of the times, he was utterly at a losse which way to take, being much molested with suggestions of Atheism, (in the depths whereof Junius was quite lost for a time) and moved and tempted to the wayes of Familisme also; for some advised him in this condition to go to Grindlestone and to hear Mr. Brierley, and being informed that the people were wont to find a mighty possessing over powering presence, and work of the Spirit when they heard him, he resolved upon the journey; but God in mercy diverted him, having reserved him for better things. Yet he read what they said, and the Books of H. N. amongst the rest, where meeting with this passage, That a Christian is so swallow'd up in the spirit, that what action soever the spirit moves him to, suppose whoredome, he may do it, and it is no sin to him; this was enough: for being against the light of his natural conscience, it bred in him an utter abhorrency of those loose and vile wayes and principles ever after. He ad-

advantage also he had, that Doctor Tuckney *was then his Tutor, whom he acquainted with his condition, and had his direction and help in those miserable fluctuations and straits of his soul. Happy is the man whose doubtings end in establishments,* nil tam certum, quàm quod de dubio certum, *but when men arrive in* Scepticism, *as the last issue & result of all their debates and thoughts of heart about Religion, it had been good for such if they had never been born.*

After his heart was changed, it was observed of him, that his abilities of mind were also much enlarged, divinity, though it be chiefly the Art and rule of the will, yet raising and perfecting the understanding also; which I conceive came to pass chiefly by this means, that the fear of God fixed him, and made him serious, and taught him to meditate, which is the main improvement of the understanding. Therefore such as came to him for direction about their studies, he would often advise them to be much in meditation, professing, that having spent some time in meditation every day in his beginning times, and written down his thoughts; he saw cause now to blesse God for it. He was assigned to the work of the Ministery at a solemn meeting and conference of sundry godly Ministers about it, there were to the number of twelve present at the meeting, whose solemn advice was that he should serve the Lord in the Gospel of his Son; *wherein they have been the salvation of many a soul: for upon this he addrest himself to the work, with that reality and seriousnesse in wooing and winning souls, that his words made deep impressions, and seldome or never fell to the ground.*

He was lecturer a while at Earles-cone *in* Essex *(which I take it was the first place of his Ministery)*

where he did much good, and the people there, though now it is long since, and many are gone, yet they have a very precious and deep remembrance of him, of the mighty power of God by him to this day. But W. Lawd *then Bishop of* London *soon stopt his mouth, and drove him away, as he did many other godly Ministers from* Essex *at the same time. After this he lived at* Butter-chrome *in* Yorkshire, *at Sir* Richard Darleys *house, till the Iniquity of those times hunted him thence also. Then he went to* Northumberland *till silenced there also; and being thus molested and chased up and down at home, he fled to* New-England, *and after some difficulties and delayes, by great storms and disasters at Sea upon the Sands and Coasts of* Yarmouth, *which retarded his voyage till another year, he arrived there at last; where he was Pastor to a precious flock at* Cambridge *about fourteen yeers. He was but 46. or 47. years old when he dyed. His sickness began with a sore throat, and then a squinacy, and then a fever, whereof he dyed* August 25. 1649. *This was one thing he said upon his deathbed, Lord, I am vile, but thou art righteous; and to those that were about him, he bade them love Jesus Christ dearly, that little part that I have in him, is no small comfort to me now.*

His manner of preaching was close and searching, and with abundance of affection and compassion to his hearers. He took great pains in his preparations for his publick labours, accounting it a cursed thing to do the work of the Lord negligently; and therefore spending usually two or three whole dayes in preparing for the work of the Sabbath, had his Sermons finished usually on Saturday *by two of the clocks. He hath sometime exprest himself thus in publick;*

"God will curſe that mans labours that lumbers "up and down in the world all the week, and "then upon *Saturday* in the afternoon goes to "his Study, when as God knows that time were "little enough to pray and weep in, and to get "his heart in frame, &c. *He affected plainneſſe together with power in preaching, not ſeeking abſtruſities, nor liking to hover and ſoar aloft in dark expreſſions, and ſo ſhoot his Arrows (as many Preachers do) over the heads of his hearers.*

It is a wretched ſtumbling block to ſome, that his Sermons are ſomewhat ſtrict, and (as they term it) legall: ſome ſouls can reliſh none but meal-mouth'd Preachers, who come with ſoft and ſmooth, and toothleſſe words, byſſina verba byſſinis viris: *But theſe times need humbling Miniſteries, and bleſſed be God that there are any; for where there are no Law-Sermons, there will be few Goſpel-lives, and were there more Law-preaching in* England *by the men of gifts, there would be more Goſpel-walking both by themſelves and the People. To preach the Law, not in a forc'd affected manner, but wiſely and powerfully, together with the Goſpel, as Chriſt himſelf was wont to do* (Mat. 5. *and elſewhere*) *is the way to carry on all three together, ſenſe of miſery, the application of the remedy, and the returns of thankefulneſſe and duty.* Nor *is any doctrine more comforting than this humbling way of God, if rightly managed.*

It is certain the foundations of after-ſorrows and ruines to the Church, have ever been laid in the days of her proſperity, and peace, and reſt, when ſhe injoyes all her pleaſant things. This the watchmen of Iſrael *ſhould foreſee, and therefore what ſhould they do but ſeek to humble and awaken, and ſearch and melt mens hearts, and* warn every one night and

day with tears, that in the day of their peace, they may not sin away the things of their Peace. There are therefore three requests, which we would desire to beg of God, with bended knees for England, to perpetuate the present prosperity and peace thereof; and let us commend them to the mourning and praying ones amongst us, that they would be the Lords remembrancers in these Petitions.

1. A right understanding and sober use of liberty. For when People come first out of bondage, they are apt to be not only somewhat fond of their liberties, but to wax giddy and wanton with liberty, and instead of shaking off the bloody yokes of men, to cast off at least in part the Government and blessed yoke of Christ also. Hence it comes about, that a day of rest from persecution, which should be a day of liberty to the Saints to serve God, may become a day of great seduction, and of liberty to seducing Spirits, to deceive, and damn, and mislead them from the truths and wayes of God. But the machinations of men, though in conjunction with the powers and gates of hell, shall certainly fall at last before Truth and Prayer. And of this is the first Treatise which is seasonably publish'd.

To be fast bound to the rule with all the bonds and cords of God and Man is the Perfection of liberty. Hence there is not a surer Corner-stone of ruine to a Christian Commonwealth, that God will break them with unparalleld destructions by some overflowing scourge, when the day of vengeance is in his heart, than to think that Religion is none of their Liberties, and yet how many sons of Belial, are there void of counsell, neither is there any understanding in them, who imagine vain things, and say, Let us break his bands asunder, and cast away his cords

from

from us? *How do men run into extremes, either ſtretching and paring every one to the Gyants bed, and thereby denying liberty to the Saints to ſerve him, according to the meaſure of their ſtature in Chriſt, or elſe on the other hand opening the door ſo wide, as to plead for liberty to all the diſguiſed enemies and ſins againſt Chriſt, thereby inſtead of uniting the Saints in one, indeavouring through a dreadfull miſtake to unite Chriſt and Belial? It is a ſad thing when a man is come to this paſſe, that he is not able to reſolve his conſcience whether* Baal *be God, or the Lord be God, and therefore would not have the worſhippers of* Baal *puniſht, for fear leſt* Baal *ſhould be God. Is liberty nothing but indifferency and irreſolution of ſpirit in the things of God? woe to the valley of viſion, even to a ſinfull Nation laden with iniquity, and led away from the truth as it is in Jeſus, and to the Hoſt of the high ones that ſit on high, in the day of his viſitation, if this be the ſpirit of theſe times; for in the day when he viſits, God will viſit for theſe things.*

2. *That his Word, eſpecially the Word of his Goſpel, may be precious and powerfull,* may run and be glorified in *England. Alas! as there is much preaching, but few ſerious, few heart-breaking Sermons: ſo there is much hearing, but little effectual hearing. Men ſtand like* the Oakes of *Baſhan, before the words of the God of* Iſrael, *no terrour of the Lord, no news of everlaſting deſtruction, no evidence of the fierce anger of God upon them,* which burns down to the bottom of hell, *can take hold upon their ſpirits, or awaken their conſciences, to make inquiries after God in this their day: yea if the bars of the pit of hel, were broken, and if the devils of hell ſhould come flying up amongſt us, in our ſolemn Aſ-*

ſemblies;

ſemblies, from the fiery corners of the Pit below, with everlaſting burnings about their eares, and with chains of darkneſs ratling at their heels, they might fright men out of their wits perhaps, or from the acts of ſin it may be for a time, but it would not work upon their hearts, their deſperate, dead, beſotted hearts. The fooles in Iſrael *will have their ſwinge in their luſts, and go to hell in a full cariere, let God do his beſt. Oh the hardneſſe of mens hearts! And the main reaſon of it, is becauſe they hear but a ſound of words, but they do not hear the Lord in that Word: they hear words that are ſpoken by God, but they hear not, they ſee not God himſelf therein. If ever thou wouldeſt profit by reading or hearing, take every word as a ſpeciall meſſage to thee from God; and of this fruitleſs hearing, and the rules of hearing aright is the other Treatiſe.*

3. *Conſcience of his Sabbath. Of which there is an elaborate diſcourſe of this Author, formerly publiſh'd by himſelf. Therefore we ſhall adde no more. The bleſſing of heaven go with theſe, to make us* a willing People in the day of his power, *to ſubmit to his Word, and to come under the wing of the Government of Jeſus Chriſt, as eſteeming theſe ſpirituall mercies our beſt mercies, our choyceſt and deareſt liberties. If ever the Lord Jeſus (which mercy forbid) ſhould take his dolefull and finall farewell of the* Engliſh *Nation, as when he laid the tomb-ſtone upon* Jeruſalem, *ſuch as theſe will be his mournings over us:* Oh Jeruſalem, Jeruſalem, thou that killeſt the Prophets and burneſt them that are ſent unto thee, *as they did in the time of Popery,* how often would I have gathered thy children together *(by my Word and Spirit therein)* even as a Hen gathereth her Chickens under the wings *(of my ſpeciall*

Govern-

Government and Protection?) but ye would not; behold your houſe is left unto you deſolate. *But the Lord who doth not only make the day dark with night, but alſo turneth the ſhadow of death into the morning, even the Lord avert theſe evils, and the Lord make the* Engliſh *Nation* his Hephſibah, and the land Beulah, *which is the prayer of his Mourners in* Sion, *and of*

Thy Servants in Jeſus, and for
Jeſus ſake,

William Greenhill.

Samuel Mather.

TO

TO THE *Chriſtian* READER.

THe precious memory of the Author of theſe enſuing SERMONS, needs no reviving to any gracious heart, that had any knowledge of him. Yea the world knows in part (though but in a little part) by ſome pieces of his formerly Printed (while he was yet with us) who this Author was, what it owes to God for him, and how juſtly it might ſigh over his grave, with that of the Apoſtle, *Of whom the World was not worthy*! His praiſe throughout all the Churches, is farre above any addition by ſo mean a pen as writes theſe lines. But it is not fit that the firſt page of any thing publiſhed after his death (for I doubt not but his death is long ago publickly took notice of) ſhould go without ſome witneſſe of a mournfull remembrance thereof, which indeed no tears can ſufficiently lament. We who ſometimes *ſate under his ſhadow*, and were fed from God by him, (the poor flock of this *Shepherd*) among whom he lived, *teſtifying Repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*; and whom he ſometimes *exhorted, comforted and charged every one of us as a Father doth his*

Children,

Children; we cannot but carry ſorrow in the bottome of our hearts to this day, that wee muſt here ſee his face no more. Neither do we believe that his loſſe remains with us alone, or only within the limits of this remote wilderneſſe; the benefit (and conſequently the want) of ſuch a burning and ſhining Light, is of more generall concernment than we eaſily apprehend, eſpecially in this Age, wherein not only many ſit in utter darkneſſe, but which is more, the *new Light* thereof is darkneſſe; and *the Love of many waxing cold*. But we muſt all be ſilent before Him, whoſe judgements are unſearchable. Neither may we preſume to ſay to him, What doeſt thou?

It is inſtantly and not without cauſe deſired by many, that ſuch reliques of his Labours as do ſurvive him, may be (at leaſt ſome of them) imparted to the publick. To effect any thing conſiderable that way, is not an eaſie or ſudden work. But this ſmall piece being at preſent attained; it ſeemed not amiſſe to let it paſs the Preſs. Theſe were ſome of his *Lecture-Sermons*, Preached moſt of them in the year, 1641. They are now tranſcribed by a godly Brother, partly from the Authors own notes, partly from what he took from his mouth: The ſubject (in both the Texts) is of great uſe, and needfull for theſe times; wherein there is more Liberty, than good uſe of it; and much more common and outward, than ſaving and effectuall knowledge of the word of God. Theſe poſthumous editions are far ſhort of what the Author was wont to do, and of what the Sermons were in preaching. But though the ſenſe be not every where ſo full, nor every thing ſo tho-

thorowly spoken to, nor the stile so good by far, (as the Authors manner was) yet the intelligent Reader will find a precious treasure of truth in it, not fit to be buried or neglected. The *Prophets do not live for ever*, but their words do: The Lord make them such ever-living words as may take hold of all our hearts, not for judgement, but for mercy, for one of these wayes they shall live; yea, rise up at the last day.

March 29. 1652. *Imprimatur*,

EDM. CALAMY.

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Jean Galloway
Her book
1713

A WHOLESOME CAVEAT For a time of LIBERTY.

2 CHRON. 12. 8.

Nevertheleſſe they ſhall be his ſervants, that they may know my ſervice, and the ſervice of the kingdoms of the Countrey.

THe greateſt part of this Chapter is ſpent in ſetting down that famous War which *Shiſhak* King of *Egypt* made againſt *Rehoboam* King of *Judah*.

The cauſe of this War in regard of *Shiſhak* is not ſet down; probable conjectures there be: *Jeroboam* probably might be treacherous, who having a party in *Egypt*, leſt *Rehoboam* ſhould grow too great, together with ſome other pretended wrongs, might awaken this Bear from his den; but in regard of God, you may ſee the Reaſon ſet down, *Verſ.* 2. *Becauſe they had tranſgreſſed againſt the Lord.*

The time of this War is ſet down in the 1. *Verſ. When he had eſtabliſhed the Kingdome* by wholeſome Lawes, erecting Gods worſhip, and countenancing godly men, 2 *Chro.* 11. 16, 17. which continued three years, *and*

ſtrengthened himſelf by fortified places, and munition fit for war, as in the foregoing Chapter appears. Now when he had moſt peace and quiet, he and all Iſrael ſuddenly forſake the Lord, which was the fourth year; and in the fifth year comes *Shiſhak*, and with a mighty hoaſt waſtes all before him untill he come to the chief City.

Now in *Verſ.* the 5. and 6. is ſet down the repentance of the people with their Princes eſpecially. *Shemajah*, who no doubt had ſpoke againſt their idolatrous courſes before, takes his ſeaſon when they were low and tamed, and tels them the true cauſe of their miſery, *Verſ.* 5. Many ſins there were in the Land, as Idolatry, and Whoredomes, &c. yet the venom was, *They had forſaken the Lord:* Let the ſin be what it will be, yet let it be ſuch a one as men forſake the Lord by it, that's the provocation; hereupon they humble themſelves, ſome effectually, ſome hypocritically, yet all outwardly, and ſay the Lord is righteous; they extenuate not their ſin, they lay not the blame on man, no not on *Shiſhak*, but ſee the Lord, juſtifie his proceedings, The Lord is righteous, we unrighteous, although it were more heavy then it is.

Now in the 7. *Verſ.* and in the words read is ſet down the mitigation of Gods plague, and the moderation of his chaſtiſement, *I will not pour out all my wrath*, yet I think it not fit to ſhew perfect deliverance, *I'le make them ſervants, to let them know, &c.*

There are two parts in the words read.

1. The puniſhment or chaſtiſement on *Judah* for forſaking the Lord, and backſliding from him, which is bondage and privation of the liberty they had, they muſt be *Shiſhaks* ſervants.

2. The Lords end, it was very gracious, *That they may know my ſervice, &c.*

For explication.

1. What is meant by ſervice?

Anſw. There are two things in ſervice. 1. Government. 2. Subjection: cheerfull obedience to that government. Both the Hebrew word, as alſo the nature of the thing it ſelf hath theſe two.

God ſets up his Government over a people, his people do or ſhould ſubject cheerfully to this government; By my ſervice is therefore meant my government, and your ſubjection wrought by me to this government.

2. *They*

2. *They shall know.*

1. Not by the knowledge of the brain, for that they know now, but knowledge of experience, as it's said in *Ezek. 6. ult.* When I shall have made the Land desolate in all their habitations, they shall know that I am the Lord. Now what shall they know of it?

Answ. The difference between them, the sorrow of the one, the sweet of the other; the misery of the one, and blessednesse of the other; the bondage of the one, and the liberty of the other.

There might be many things observed from the words, but I note only the generall.

Obser. *That when any people of God forsake the Lord, and cast off his government over them, they provoke the Lord to put them under the bondage of another government.* They that abuse Gods liberty must be under bondage; the Lord hath a Kingdome in this world most glorious; hence when men will not be under it, if they will not be ruled by him, they must be ruled by the whip; and if Christs laws cannot bind, Christs chains must. *Jer. 5. 19. And it shall come to passe when ye shall say, Wherefore doth the Lord all these things unto us? then shalt thou answer them, Like as ye have forsaken me, and served strange gods in your land, so shall ye serve strangers in a land that is not yours.* Psal. 107. 10, 11, *Such as sit in darknesse and in the shadow of death, being bound in affliction and iron, because they rebelled against the words of God, and contemned the counsell of the most high.* Ezek. 20. 24, 25. *Because they had not executed my Judgements, but had despised my Statutes, and polluted my Sabbaths, &c. Wherefore I gave them also statutes that were not good, and judgements, whereby they should not live, &c.* Zach. 11. 15, 16. *And the Lord said unto me, Take unto thee yet the instruments of a foolish Shepherd.* Vers. 16. *For lo I will raise up a shepherd in the land which shall not visit those that be cut off, nor seek the young one, nor heal that that is broken, nor feed that that standeth still, &c.* Doctr. 1.

When people break covenant with God, and loath him, then saith the Lord, I'le not feed and then he sets over them Idol shepherds.

This is certain, when the soul will not subject it self to God, he goes about to subject God to him, nay to his lusts, *Isa. 43. 24. Thou hast made me to serve with thy sins.* For one of them must stoop, and a man would have the Lord be mercifull, patient, and pittifull to him, when he is in

league with his lusts, now this the Lord will not do. And hence, if he does not destroy him, he with-draws himself from serving of the creature, and hence other evils take hold of it, and bring it under. When *Adam* stood, and was for God, all creatures served him, and the riches of Gods goodnesse preserved him, the Lord communicated the sweet of his government or service to him: but when turned away from the right wayes of God: Now if the Lord should serve him by governing of him in goodnesse, he should serve a lust, and bow to the creature, nay to a lust, which is a viler thing, then for one creature to fall down and worship another. Therefore now hence it comes to passe, because the Lord will not be a servant to any mans lust, there must be some other government that must seize upon them. Hence set all the Saints in the Churches with their faces subjected to the Lord, his good wil and righteous wayes, and then his goodness shall flow down upon them in a through Christ, for otherwise we have nothing to do with good, but when we are set right for God. *Hos.* 2. 19. *I will betroth thee unto me for ever, yea I will betroth thee unto me in righteousnesse, in judgement, in loving kindnesse and mercy, &c.* The Lord will then command all creatures to be serviceable to his Church and people; *Vers.* 21, 22. But on the contrary misery must needs seiz upon the soul that doth cast off the government of the Lord Jesus: Thus much for the generall explication of the point.

Now in particular. 1. What is this government or service of God?

2. What is that bondage he captivates his unto?

3. Why doth the Lord do thus?

Quest. 1. *Quest.* 1. What is this government or service of God, which being shaken off the Lord gives them over to bondage?

Answ. *Ans.* There is a double government of the Lord over his people.

1. Internall or inward, of which our Saviour speaks, *Luk.* 17. 21. *The kingdome of God* (saith Christ) *comes not by observation* and outward pomp; *For behold the kingdome of God is within you*: And this is nothing else in generall, but when the Lord doth by his Spirit in the word of his grace cause the whole soul willingly to submit and subject it self to the whole will of God so

ſo far as it's made known to it; this is the inward kingdom of God and government of Chriſt in the ſoul. *Ro.* 8: 14. *So many as are led by the Spirit are the ſons of God.* Pſ. 110. 2. *The Lord ſhall ſend the rod of thy ſtrength out of Zion, &c.* 2. Cor. 10. 4. *For the weapons of our warfare are not carnall, but mighty through God the pulling down of ſtrong holds.* Verſ. 5. *Bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Chriſt.* There are mighty boiſterous diſtempers, but the Lord when he comes in his Kingdome, to ſit upon the royall throne of the hearts of his people, now they flie: and this is the inward Kingdom of Chriſt, like a poor Subject pardoned and received to favour, he is before the face of the Prince continually attending on him. *Revel.* 7. 14, 15. *Theſe are they which came out of great tribulation, and have waſhed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.* Verſ. 15. *Therefore are they before the throne of God, and ſerve him day and night in his Temple, &c.* Now this is meant in part by Gods ſervice in theſe dayes; do you think the Lord cared for thouſands of Rams? no, *but to walk humbly*, Mica. 6. Did he care for Temple and Ordinances? no, but *Iſa.* 1. 19. *If he be willing and obedient, ye ſhall eat the good of the land.* Neh. 9. 20. *In thoſe dayes hee gave them his good Spirit to inſtruct them.*

2. Externall or outward, the end and inſtigation of which was to ſet up and help forward the inward; for externall Ordinances are nothing in themſelves, mean things, but as they are appointed and ſanctified for this end, they are moſt glorious: and therefore Chriſt threatens the Jewes, *Matth.* 21. 43. That *the Kingdome ſhould be taken from them*; what was that? Surely not inward, for that they had not, but the outward and externall means called Gods kingdom; all theſe helps and means ſhall be taken from you, and all laid ruinous. Now this externall kingdom of Chriſt is double.

1. The externall kingdome or government of God by his Church, in the adminiſtration and execution, and ſubjection to the bleſſed Ordinances of God, wherein the power and Kingdome of Chriſt is ſeen, and thus, *Dan.* 2. 44, 45. *Dan.* 7. 27. *It ſhall be given to the Saints of the moſt high, &c.* Not to prophane herds of beaſts, or cages of unclean birds, but to the Saints

of the most high, *Whose kingdome is an everlasting kingdome*, and all the Princes of the world shall subject themselves to this kingdom of Christ.

This outward Kingdom Christ administreth amongst his people in this world: And this was part of the Lords government over his people herein, though various from our form now.

2. Of the Common-wealth, which may have divers forms, and had in the time of *Israel*; but it receiving its law from God, and governing for God, hence it was the government of God, and subjection hereunto was subjection and service to God himself: And hence when the people cast off *Samuel*, 1 *Sam* 8. 7. *They have not rejected thee but me*, Rev. 11. 15. *The kingdomes of the world are become the kingdomes of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever.* For although the Common-wealth of *Israel* was made up of the Church, and hence *Josephus* cals it a *Theocracy*, where the Lord governed; and yet the same thing had divers πολιτείας, formes and respects, and hence there was a diverse government then, and hence made diverse, 2 *Chron.* 19. 5, 8. *Jehosaphat sets Judges in the land throughout all the fenced Cities.* Such is the wildnesse, boldnesse, & carelesnesse of mens hearts, that they do not only need lawes, but watchmen over them to see they be kept: and hence the Lord appointed some chief, some Judges in every City, and also some in every Village, as by proportion may be gathered, *Exod.* 18. every ten men had one over them.

Now this was the blessed wisdome of God to put all into sweet subordination one unto another for himself.

1. Every one professing his name is made for God, for Christ, *as Lord of Lords, unto whom every knee must bow*, and inwardly subject.

2. Hence the Lord (it being not good to leave man to himself) erects a Kingdome of the Church with his own power, and authority, and government in it for that end.

3. This being poor and shiftlesse against inward and outward revenge, hence the Lord sets up Kingdoms of the world, which either rule for this end or these ends or not, if they do not, they are to answer it, and shall one day to Christ, *whom God hath made head over all things to the Church* Eph. 1. 22. If they do, then their government, judgement and kingdome is the Lords in a speciall manner:

ner: and hence break the yoak of subjection to any one of these, you cast off Christ, the Lords government and service; and being so linked together, in truth if you break one you break all, and this will provoke the Lord to make you kisse the clink, and to put your necks under iron bondage that refuse subjection to him.

Quest. 2. What is that bondage or other government to which the Lord gives over his people when they have cast off his government, this will provoke the Lord if the Lord be cast off, and the casting off the government of Christ will bring the most famous Kingdoms, Churches and Families into bondage; you will say what is this bondage? when is it that the Lord takes his season for the execution of it? *Quest.* 2.

A. 1. The Lord takes his own times to do it, these were a 12. moneth before the Lord sent *Shishak*: Here he was more quick, *Nebuchadnezzar* comes at last, and many years 'tis before the Lord doth it. *Answ.* 1.

2. The Lord is various in working, as he is wonderfull and hath divers wayes or means of bondage, he hath more prisons and chaines than one. *Answ.* 2.

First, sometimes the Lord opens the door of a Kingdom or State, for the inrode of some forraign, or it may be barbarous Enemy, breaking in sometime by power, comming in sometime by craft, and then ruling like Lions, which the Lord makes to vex and prick the people of God; thus here their lives were spared, but liberties lost. Thus *Judg.* 2. 13, 14. *They forsook the Lord, and served Baal and Ashtaroth.* And in *vers.* 14. *The anger of the Lord waxed hot against Israel, and he delivered them into the hands of spoylers that spoyled them.* Ver. 15. *Whithersoever they went out, the hand of the Lord was against them for evill.* And this the Lord doth many times suddenly, that one would never think that ever the Lord should be so sudden; the Lord can be as quick to punish, as man to sin, and that unexpectedly. *Eccl.* 9. 12. *Man knows not his time but are taken like fish in an evill net suddenly,* Lam. 4. 12. *The kingdomes of the earth, and all the inhabitants of the world would not have beleeved,* Judg. 5. 8. *They set up new gods, and war was in the gate.*

2. Sometimes the Lord turns the edge of that lawfull authority God hath set over them against themselves, to be a heavy scourge from God upon them: Thus it was with *Israel* in Egypt, *Exod.* 1. 8, 9. there arose a King which

which knew not *Joseph*, and it's said then they were oppressed. Thus *Jeroboam* whom the ten Tribes chose, *Hos.* 5. 11. he oppressed the people he will be innovating, and this becomes their oppression: Thus the people under the reign of degenerate *Solomon* (though their complaint might be in part unjust.) Such is the venome of sin an unsubduednesse to the Kingdom God, that the Lord turns light into darknesse, and makes an aking head matter of sorrow to all the state and body of people. *Eccles.* 10. 16. *Wo to thee, O Land. when thy King is a child.* And one man shall do a world of hurt, one *Shebna* or *Amaziah*, and this the Lord doth in justice many times for castiug off his government.

3. Sometimes the Lord gives a people up into the hands of one another to be mutuall oppressors of each other, that a man neighbour shall be his oppressor. *Zach.* 11. 9 *I will pitty no more the inhabitants of the land, I will deliver them every one into his neighbours hands. I will feed you no more, that which dyeth let it dye, & that which is cut off let it be cut off, and let the rest eat every one the flesh of another.* Sometimes the Lord is pleased to send marvellous straits into a place, that men are forced to imbondage themselves sometimes by words as bitter as death, as sharp as arrows; the Lord is pleased for the forsaking of his righteous wayes to make a mans self rip his own bowels, the father against the childe, the master shall be a scourge to the servant, and the servant shall be a scourge to his master, weary him of his life, the government of the Lord in a mans heart or family being cast off, *Mic.* 7. 4,5. *Trust not in a friend*: No greater bondage in the world then for men professing the Lord, to be desperately set one against another.

4. By taking from a people all that righteous power of government the Lord hath set over them, when a people despising the Lord and inward government first (for there all begins) and so not prizing what they have, nor praying for them, nor subjecting to them, the Lord hereupon sends some sickneſse, or some other evill, that they are either suddenly taken away, or gradually, and when they are gone, all sink, or else such crosse carriages, that as *Moses* said, so say they, *I cannot bear this people.* Thus *Judges* 21. 25. *Men did what was right in their own eyes when there was no King in Israel.* No State so miserable as an Anarchie, when every one is a slave, because

every

every one will be a Maſter. Thus, *Iſa.* 3, 1, 2. 6. *Be a ruler to us.* No, I'le not undertake to rule. So, 2 *Chro.* 15. 3. 5. when *without a teaching Prieſt*, then *no peace at all*, men will not be under government of them, you ſhall not have them, they ſhall reſt in peace, and you ſhall then know the want of them.

5. By giving them over to Satans, and their own hearts luſts, that ſeeing they will not ſerve the Lord, they ſhall ſerve their luſts and their ſins, that now the Lord he hath left off chaſtiſing of men, and conſcience ſhall check no more, proſper, ſaith the Lord, & go on in thy ſin, *Pſal.* 81. 12. *So I gave them up to their own hearts luſts, and they walked after their own counſels.* Rev. 22. 11. *Let him that is filthy be filthy ſtill.*

When the Lord ſhall give a man over to Satan, not only to winnow him, to let out the chaffe, and ſo to make the grain the purer, or to buffet them as he did *Paul*, but to inſnare them, and hold them, that he ſhall not only tempt, but his temptations ſhall take, and not onely take, but holds, 2 *Tim.* 2. *ult. Who are taken captive by him at his will*; taken alive as a ſnare doth, that now a man is beyond the reach of all means, only *peradventure God may give repentance*, Iſa. 1. 5. *Why ſhould ye be ſtricken any more? ye will revolt yet more and more.* The Lord leaves ſmiting, and ſayes, Go on and proſper in thy ſinne: and which is the worſt of all, Satan ſhall ſo blinde him and harden him, fill him with pride, paſſion, lying, hatred of Gods people, cavilling againſt the Lords wayes of grace, ſlighting of his betters deſpiſing of wholeſome counſell from his deareſt friends, that he *knows not that gray hairs are upon him.* And after this when God hath caſt out, it may be the Church doth alſo, a moſt fearfull bondage that the Lord gives ſuch a foul over unto.

There are two reaſons of this point, which I collect only from the ſtory in this Chapter.

Reaſon. 1. Inregard of the righteous Judgement of God. It's juſt and equall that he that will not be ruled by this bleſſed Lord Jeſus, he ſhould be ruled by his luſts; he that will uot be in ſubjection to a merciſull Chriſt, he ſhould be in bondage to unmerciſull men: this an humbled heart will acknowledge, as theſe do here, *Verſ.* 6. They acknowledged the Lord to be righteous; Man being fallen it had been righteous with God

God to have left all men as the Angels that fell in chains of darkneſſe for ever. But among his Church and people the Lord ſends the Goſpel to proclaim liberty, and with it ſends Chriſt with his Spirit, to come to the priſon-doores of poor ſinners, to give repentance as well as remiſſion of ſins, and now if they will not come out of their bondage, accept of the Lords liberty, 'tis exceeding righteous to deal with them as we do with priſoners condemned to die; if the Prince comes to the priſon-doores, and ſayes, I am come to give thee thy life, nay and here is pardon; nay favour, and to pull off thy chaines alſo, now if he ſaies no, I had rather be in priſon; every one will ſay it is juſt; and as it was in the year of Jubile he that would not go free was to be a bondman for ever. 'Tis very righteous to give men their own choyce, 'tis no wrong to let them have their own will: If indeed the laws of Chriſt were *Draco's* lawes, hard and heavy, there were ſomething to object, but they are moſt ſweet, and for which of all other bleſſings men have cauſe to bleſſe him, *Pſal.* 147. *ult.*

Reaſ. 2: *Reaſon* 2. In regard of the mercy or mercifull wiſdom of the Lord towards his Church and people, eſpecially his peculiar ones, that hereby they keep the cloſer to the Lord, ſet a higher price upon the rules and government of the Lord, love his kingdome the more, and the liberties thereof, and uſe them better when they have them again, ſo here, *that they may know my ſervice, &c.*

1. 1. How ſweet it is. Experience we ſay is the Miſtreſs of fools; ſuch is the fooliſhneſs of mens hearts that men are many times never truly taught a truth till they are taught it by ſenſe, *Prov.* 5. 11. *and thou mourn at laſt when thy fleſh is conſumed*; tell a man of all the glory of the Saints, they never underſtand it till they feel it, tell men of the woe of their wayes; they will not believe it till they ſee it, *Pſal.* 32. 9. *Be not as the horſe or mule that hath no underſtanding, whoſe mouth muſt be held in with bit and bridle. Hoſea* 10. 11. *Ephraim is like an Heifer that is taught.* Like untamed Horſes that will caſt their rider, unleſſe they be held under and backt, and then they are gentle, ſo 'tis here; and truly 'tis long before a man can learn the ſweet of Chriſts government: hence *Iſrael* muſt be long in *Egyptian* bondage, and many long miſeries, ſo that if there be either juſtice or mercy in the Lord he will do this, and this point ſhall be true.

Uſe

Vſe 1. Hence then ſee that the greateſt liberty and ſweeteſt liberty is to be under the government of Chriſt Jeſus, although men do not think ſo: hence the Lord tells them here *they ſhall know my ſervice*, they might have replyed we do know it. No, till they be in bonds they know it not, nor cannot learn it. So 'tis now; and hence let men obſerve whiles they live looſly, and are guided by their own wiſdome, for their own ends, according to their own will, at peradventures, at rovers, as they pleaſe, they do think this liberty very ſweet; and 'tis better than to be curb'd in: But let the Lord ſtrike an arrow in the heart of theſe wilde bucks, that have broke park and pale, ſend affliction, and an Iron yoke of ſorrow upon them, or diſtreſſe of conſcience, if there be any ſenſe and feeling left, they will bemoan themſelves, and ſay, I did think my liberty ſweet, but now I ſee 'tis bitter in a ſinfull way: and the Lords way was moſt ſweet, by their own confeſſion. Hence *Pſal.* 2. 3. *Let us break their bands, &c.* But Oh now hence learn this truth, and digeſt it throughly, that the greateſt liberty lies here: do not in thy judgement think Chriſtian liberty lies, in being freed from the law as a rule of obedience in reſpect of the matter of it to be done, nor in thy practice; but know, though thou didſt meet with a thouſand Sorrows with it and griefs, yet 'tis ſweet. Chriſts *yoke*, (Mar. 11. 30.) *is eaſie, and his burthen light.* What? When not a hole to hide his head in, when a reproach of men, a worm and no man, when he bore the Fathers wrath? Yes, when he was meek under it, (*not mine but thy will be done*) it was then moſt ſweet, 1 *Kings* 9. 21, 22. To be a ſervant to *Solomon* is no bondage, *Pſalm.* 119. 32. *I will run, when thou ſhalt inlarge my heart.* *Vſe* 1.

Vſe 2. Hence ſee the reaſon why the Lord hath deprived his Churches of their liberty, and his government over them at ſundry times, and hath put them under Iron yokes, and bonds, and ſore preſſures, the reaſon is ſhewn, they have either openly or more ſecretly caſt off the government of the Lord, here hath been the very wound the aile of all Churches famous and glorious, *Pſal.* 81. 14. *Oh that they had hearkened, I ſhould then ſoon have ſubdued their enemies.* The cauſe is not ſo hard to find to a diſcerning ſpirit who is privy in any meaſure to the counſels of God, 1 *King.* 9. 8, 9. *Solomon* hath a promiſe that *the Lords eyes and heart ſhall be to his people* which are under *Vſe* 2.

der him: but if once they slip the Coller, then wo; and why? *Because they forsook the Lord that brought them out of Egypt*, they had liberty, but they cast it off.

What do you think was the moving cause of all those bloody persecutions, when the blood of dogs was more precious then of Christian Churches? were not they godly? yes, I do not doubt of it: but as it was here, though humbled they must be in bondage, because they had cast off the government of the Lord Jesus. And hence in the Apostles time evill times were come, sad apostasies from the truth, and because it was long before they were low enough. And hence, *Revel. 6.* till the fifth seal was opened; no crying, as it was with *Israel* in bondage, no prayer to purpose, and because the Lord saw they would abuse all liberties if they had them. And hence in *Constantines* time, when peace came in, contention came with it, and so abused all, that their peace was their poyson. And hence in the primitive Churches, they began to cast off the government of the Lord Jesus, murmurings there were, hence came persecution; but they were a precious people, and made blessed use of it. And the Lord couples their chief persecution with their rest. And 'tis said, *Acts 9. 31. Then had the Churches rest, &c.*

And what do you think of the reason of the long reign of Antichrist, exalting himself above God and all that's called God, bringing the Church under the heaviest bondage for body and soul that ever the earth saw? Men did not love the truth, either speculative to guide their minds, or practicall to rule their wills; and hence left to this day.

What is the cause of Bleeding *Germanies* wo? Oh poor *Germany*! Whence the Gospell first brake out in its full strength, that now 'tis a field of blood, that men in woods like satyres are afraid of men, and men in Cities glad to eat the intrailes of Beasts, and sometimes the flesh of their own babes to preserve their lives. What was there no evill, but the common condition of the Church to be under the crosse? ask them, they cannot tell what ailes them, but curse the *Emperour* and *Swedes*, *&c.*

Oh

Oh think of it with ſorrow in ſecret for them that know it not themſelves, they have ſecretly, I ſay, ſecretly caſt off the government of a merciſull Chriſt, and hence are under the hand of unmerciſull men.

What is the cauſe in our native Countrey, notwithſtanding all prayers and tears no diliverance? truly men do not know it but the Lord ſees it, they know not how to uſe their liberty.

And for our ſelves, what ſhall I ſay, I cannot but bleſſe God and wonder to ſee how 'tis with many, and rejoyce to ſee many precious holy ones, to whom *one day in Gods Court is ſweeter than a thouſand elſewhere*: but I muſt profeſſe and cannot but mourn for others, men that were eminent under bondage, but never worſe then here; as if the Lord ſhould ſay, Look here be your eminent ones; look, and fear, and mourn you Miniſters of my houſe; here be the people you had thought had been converted, and that of all others ſuch a one would never a fallen ſo; one an opinion takes him, another a lot, another looſe company, another his luſt, another gowes proud, another fierce, another murmuring: what ſhould I name all? Oh that my words might be healing, &c.

Uſe 3. Hence ſee what will become of us that are now under the government of the Lord; if ever we caſt it off, either inward, or outward, or both. We are not dearer to him then his people *Iſrael* here, nay *Judah*. When old *Iſrael* the great and numerous tribes of *Iſrael* had ſet up calves, little *Judah* and *Benjamin* received the Prieſts, and yet they fell and were in bondage. I know we are not yet in bondage; yet it is not more unſeaſonable to ſpeak now then for the Lord to *Solomon*, 1 *King* 9. 1 *Uſe* 3.

Queſt. But there being much unſubduedneſs in the hearts of the beſt, how ſhall one know when there be ſuch ſins for which the Lord will caſt from under his government?

Anſwer 1. When men do not loath their own hearts for the unprofitableneſſe, but loath Gods ordinances ſecretly, and grow weary of them as of their burdens, *Queſt.*

dents, because of the unprofitableneſſe of them. When a people find not that speciall good by them which recompenseth all losses, and so prize them, but lay blame on them, because unfruitfull to them, *Malachie* 3. 13. He speaks to a people got out of Captivity, *Your words have been stout against me*, no say they, *'Tis in vain to serve the Lord, what profit is there in this?* you must conceive they had many losses, were very poor, as *vers.* 11. a temptation which a proud heart cannot indure above any, here is now no profit in mourning, fasting &c. and Gods own people began to think so: and hence, *Vers.* 16. *Then they spake often one to another*, there was good effect of his Sermon: now what follows? *Chapter* 4. 1. Hence the wicked shall come and cut off *Branch and Root* in *Antiochus* time, there is *a burning day a comming*, that shall burn down house, root and branch: and hence, *Matthew* 21. 43. *The kingdom shall be given to them that bring forth fruit.* You will say, we do; No thy own mouth shall condemn thee, you do not, you find no good by all the ordinances of God, and hence come those Questions: what warrant for such an ordinance? the bottome is, they never felt good of it, and hence grow weary of it: well if it be your burthen, the Lord will ease you of it.

2. When you see men (professing the fear of God) mutually naturally contentious, and continuing so: I say, contentious with Saints which they say they love, & wch they are by covenant bound to love, either from some conceived wrong, and hence cannot forgive as Christ doth them; or from a prejudicate groundlesse opinion, they care not for me, nor I for them; or from a spirit of scornfull Censoriousneſſe, what are such and such? or because distasted, because of some reproof in their sin; or by some opinion, or by some worldly conveniency, or laying out loss, or restraint of some liberty, &c. or because of some sin: Now can sit and censure; and I say, when this is mutual; for a godly man may be contended with, but he prayes and mourns and pitties, unlesse it be at some time; but when it shall continually abide so fierce and implacable *Eccles.* 7. 9. *Anger resteth in the bosome of fools*; when a man shall be glad of an occasion of difference, that so he may depart and have something to quiet conscience for breach of Covenant, that there can be no healing, but Bellies of pigs are more dear then bowels of Saints, and when quiet, upon the least occasion apt to p ck holes

2.

and

and quarrel. Now it's time for the Lord to give over to another government. *Zach.* 11. 14, 15. *When Brotherhood is broken,* then an *Idol-ſhepheard* is ſet up. *Exodus* 2. *Moſes* was ſent to deliver *Iſrael*, but he finds two *Hebrews* oppreſſed ſtriving, and muſt not be checkt neither, well then fare-well deliverance if you be of that ſpirit; you ſhall love one another better if ever the Lord doth that for you. It hath been the wiſdome of ſome Princes, when their ſubjects have been at Civill wars, to call them forth to a common enemy, and there they can agree. Oh brethren, there is no ſin like this, and yet none ſo ſlighted. You ſhall know what it is either by being yoked under enemies or ſins. The firſt of theſe breaking bonds of union to Chriſt, the other with his members.

Uſe 4. Hence ſee the reaſon why many men are delivered up to the bondage of their own luſts, the moſt ſad bondage and power of Satan, who have ſeemed to be delivered from it; truly they have caſt off the government of the Lord. Men wonder why in this Country men are more vile then ever they were, men that gave great hopes; the reaſon is this, they have ſeemed to be under Chriſts government, but ſecretly caſt it off: And hence filthy and vile luſts are their Apparitors and Purſevants, &c. *Uſe* 4.

Objection. The Saints feel a bondage, how ſhall one know the difference? *Objection.*

Anſwer. The firſt and greateſt inthralment is, when Satan and ſin ſo rule as that they know them not, this is lamentable, that like theſe, *John* 8. 33. when Chriſt told them, if they *continued in the truth it ſhould make them free*, they would not believe that ever they were in bondage: ſo here a man thinks himſelf free when he is a ſlave, thus *Pſalm.* 81. 13. *God gave them up to their own hearts luſts, and they were led by their own Councels.* The Saints may be much carried away by the power of Satans temptations, but never ſo far as to think their bondage is their freedome, and to have reaſons and arguments prevailing againſt the good wayes of Gods grace, and to have reaſons to maintain their ſinfull courſes, and that is in ſuch as have wit, and parts, and knowledge, which through the righteous judgement of God are left ſo far to abuſe it, as to make uſe of it to maintain their ſin-full luſts. *Anſw.* 1.

2. When men if they ſee their bondage yet have no heart to come out of it, in uſing all means for that end. *Anſw.* 2.

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When the will is in captivity, no captivity like it, no gally-slave like it: A childe of God hath a bondage and is led into captivity, but *Oh miserable man* he cries; but these, *Prov.* 17. 10. *have a price in their hand, but no heart to make use of it*, Ezra. 1. 5. *So many whose hearts the Lord do stirred, they gat up to go to Jerusalem*: But the Lord never stirs the hearts of these poor creatures: they know and fear, yet have no heart to get out of that condition, nay rather willingly are so. They sell themselves to their lusts, and sins, and Satan: here is (saith Satan) this gain, neglect prayer for it, tell a lye for it, break Covenant for it, lose thy peace for it: here is this honour and credit, look big on it: here is this estate, carry thy countenance high, and thus apparrel thy self with these trappings, walk thus with thy boots French-like: here is this pleasure and mirth, keep thou this company, loose thy heart, neglect thy God, give thy self over to it: here is this ease, deferre thy repentance, be cold in prayer, neglect thy family; and a man sels himself to his lust, pleasures and honours; thou art thus provok't, and therefore now thou must fret, and murmur, and rage, and hold thy own, and so ease thy heart, thus men set themselves to sale willingly.

Answ. 3. 3. When men have some heart to come out of it, but the Lord leaves men to an indifferency, and consequently to apostasie, as it was with *Agrippa* almost perswaded, and like the *Israelites* that refused to go into that good land, *Numbers* 14. And hereupon the Lord was wroth, and said they should not, but they repented and would fain have had some pitty shewed in regard of their misery, but their enemies fell upon them and destroyed them: all the plea of the *Arminians* is for this, which is nothing else but mens misery. *Luke* 14. those that were invited made their excuses and said, *I must needs go and see it*: But found no necessity to come to Christ. Now the Saints the Lord never leaves them to a spirit of indifferency, but keeps them in a spirit of necessity. I must come out of this miserable condition, saith the poor soul, they say not, flesh is weak, but I must have help. *Psalm.* 110. because 'tis *the day of the Lords power*, they must not rest contented without help; and if the Lord delayes them and hears not, they will follow the Lord so much the harder.

4. If they have any resolution to come out, and think it must not be thus, and purpose never to live thus again; yet

yet notwithstanding all their purposes and resolutions, they fall again, and never get any reall conquest, their untamed hearts and wills are never a whit more subdued. *Isaiah* 63. 7, 8. *For he said, Surely they are my people, children that will not lie: So he was their Saviour, but they soon rebelled, and vexed his holy Spirit*: their wills were never subdued. But now the Saints either the Lord preserves them from such falls and Apostasies: Or if they do depart from the Lord by reason of the prevailing power of any temptation, they ever get reall conquest by their fall, their sinfull corruption thereby gets its deadly wound. *Rom.* 11. 10. *Their backs are not alwaies bowed down*, but the Lord raiseth their bowed-down spirits, *Psalm* 145. 14. and upholdeth their spirits for them when they think they shall one day fall by the hand of such *Saul*-like sins and distempers. A carnall heart may carry a fair profession, and be in subjection to Christ for a time, but his back stands alwaies bowed down under his profession, is is his burthen, and hence at last he casts it off as a man doth his wearisome burden; but on the contrary, a child of God being indeed weary of his sin, and carrying that up and down with him as his burden, with his soul bowed down in the sense of his own vilenesse, by this means, through the help of Christ, at last he comes to get reall conquest over his sin, and cast it off.

5. When the Lord in this case lets them alone without inward or outward troubles, this is a fearfull signe. *Hosea* 4. 17. *Ephraim is joyned to his Idols, let him alone*, the Lord will take no more pains with them, he is wearied out with striving. *Isaiah* 1. 5. *Why should ye be stricken? ye will revolt yet more and more*; when the Lord sees men the worse for his mercifull corrections, he deals like parents that have striven long with their children, and can do no good on them, they then resolve to let them take their own course, and will own them no longer to be of their family: the Lord never deals thus long with his; but if their sinne will not waste by words, the Lord will then try what chaines will do, and now they shall finde good, now they shall remember their backslidings and apostasies from God, and their impenitency in sin, in secret sins, especially in the dayes of their peace and prosperity; now the Lord will make sinne as bitter as ever it was sweet. Oh consider this 5.

you that are prosperous, and because the Lord is good to you, therefore you think the Lord likes well of your wayes. No greater plague then for the Lord to give a man peace in his sinne, or if the Lord begins to afflict thee in thy name, or estate begin to be blasted, and thou canst see Gods hand on thee, and knowest it, and yet thou remainest unhumbled, this is a signe thou art under the bondage of thy sin.

Use 5. *Use* 5. For examination, whether we do, or when a people do cast off the government of the Lord and destroy his kingdome? it's needfull to know the sin, that we may prevent the misery; and 'tis certain, let *New-England* be watchfull, and make sure here, to advance the *Prince of peace*, and to keep the right and government in his hand, and you shall have the blessing of God and his Ordinances, peace and mercy in your times, and continued to your children; for *his kingdome is an everlasting kingdome, and of the encrease of his kingdome there is no end*: and on the contrary, if *New-England* cast off the government from over them. and refuse his service, the Lord will then take the kingdome from y u, and you shall then know the want of what now ye enjoy. Now because Christs government or

Kingdome is { 1. Inward / 2. Outward { in Church. / in State.

I shall let you know 1. when the inward kingdome of Christ is set up, and when 'tis razed down, which I shall do by giving you a briefe view of the nature of it, and wherein it consists, and so you may the better Judge of your own hearts in this particular. As Satan hath an inward kingdome in the hearts of those that are without, so the Lord Jesus hath an inward kingdome in the hearts of all his Saints, *Col.* 1.13. *Blessed be god* (saith the Apostle) *which hath translated us from darkenesse to light, and from the power of Satan into the kingdome of his dear sonne*, which is very spirituall, little seen, a man may be under all outward government, and yet naught here; and therefore attend: this inward kingdome therefore consists in four things, or when the whole soul submits it self to God in these four particulars.

1. 1. When the whole soul gives entertainment unto the Lord himself to come into it; for if a people shall say they are under such a government, and yet will not admit

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the Prince himſelf to come amongſt them, but keep him out of the kingdome, they caſt of his government and his kingdome.

2. When the whole ſoul cloſeth with the whole will of the Lord; for if a people ſhall receive a Prince amongſt them, but he ſhall make nh wholſome Laws to governe them but will be led by their own wills and luſts, they pull down his kingdome. 2.

3. When the whole ſoul thus cloſeth with the will of Chriſt by vertue of the power and Spirit of Chriſt: for if a people ſubmit to the will of their Prince, but 'tis not by vertue of his authority over them, command of them, and helps he hath given them for that end, but it is by reaſon of ſome forreign power, that underhand encourageth them to yield, this is poor ſubjection. 3.

4. When the ſoul thus ſubmits to Chriſt's will for the Lords ends, denying its own wiſedome or will, and is led by the Lord to his end: for if a people ſhall ſubmit to their Prince, but 'tis to ſet up other princes, he is caſt off from his throne. When a man ſhall ſerve God, and be under his government becauſe it is profitable or honourable, it ſuits his own end, this is poor ſervice in the Lords account. 4.

1. I ſay then, the ſoul is under the inward kingdome or goverment of Chriſt, when the whole ſoul gives entertainment to the *Lord of Lords*, the Lord himſelf with all his traine, in and by the Goſpell of grace, the royall ſword and Scepter of Chriſts kingdome; for when Chriſt himſelf is thus received, the kingdome of God is come to that ſoul, and entred into that heart; and hence *Mark* 1. 14, 15. the Goſpel is called *the Goſpel of the kingdome*, and when *John* and Chriſt preached *beleive and repent, for the kingdome of God is at hand.* Under which word is comprehended much, but principally Chriſt Jeſus ready to enter the ſouls of his people; and hence *John* preached Chriſt. Now 'tis ſaid, thoſe that were effectually wrought upon, *Matt.* 11. 12 that *the kingdome of heaven did ſuffer violence, and the violent take it by force*; ſo that the kingdome of God is come into the hearts of all the elect of God, when the ſoul uſes a holy violence, and the Lord do's draw the heart to an entertainment of the Lord himſelf; Many difficulties there be between them and Chriſt, and yet they break through all. 1.

This is the condition of all men by nature, they are

ſtrangers to Chriſt, and live without God and Chriſt in the world, and Chriſt from them, and ſo Satan takes poſſeſſion, and rules them, and ſo men are under the kingdome of darkneſſe, ſo that the devill himſelf poſſeſſes every naturall man: as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *he worketh in the children of diſobedience*, to run on ſo, and remain ſo. Now the Goſpel of the kingdome, and the meanes to advance Chriſt in his kingdome, makes a free offer of Chriſt himſelf; indeed it offers pardon, grace, mercy, life, glory, but all theſe are in Chriſt himſelf, and we poſſeſſe them by poſſeſſing and receiving of Chriſt himſelf; as a poor woman hath all the wealth of the man by entertaining of the man. So that the Goſpell firſtly and primarily offers Chriſt himſelf, and faith doth pitch on Chriſt himſelf, and doth *open thoſe everlaſting doores, that the King of glory may come in*, John 1. 12. 'tis ſaid, *So many as received him, he gave power to be the ſons of God*, 1 John 5. 12. *He that hath the Son, hath Life*; ſo that now let a man refuſe or reject the Lord himſelf as he is thus offered in the Goſpel, he does refuſe the kingdome of the Lord, and does refuſe to be under the power of the Lord. True, it may be ſaid the kingdom of God hath been nigh to him, when Chriſt is offered in the Goſpell, and God ſayes as it were nothing ſhall pleaſe me ſo much as this, if thou doſt receive me. *Luke* 10. *Go and preach to theſe and theſe Cities, and if they will not receive you, ſhake off the duſt of your feet, and let them know the Kingdome of God hath been nigh to them*; then Chriſt comes into the ſoul when the whole ſoul takes the Lord for himſelf, Chriſt, and all that Chriſt hath, Chriſt in a pardon, and Chriſt in a promiſe: at that very day the Lord gave the heart to receive him, then is the kingdome of God come in that heart, and with him all, life, peace, joy, and glory, God, Spirit, and all.

Now the whole ſoul receives him, when 1. The mind ſees him in the glory of his grace, that though it had low, mean thoughts of Chriſt before, for which it mourns; yet the riſing of this glorious Sun upon him, *he eſteems all things loſſe for him that he may win Chriſt, and be found in Chriſt, I in him, and He in me*, in Vocation: *and not having my own righteouſneſſe*, in juſtification: And *to feel the life of Chriſt and death alſo*, in ſanctification: And *to attain to the reſurrection of the dead*, in glorification: and now nothing is dear to the ſoul but Chriſt. —— 2. When the will, after the ſoul hath had ſome hopes the Lord may look towards

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it in his grace, and having had many heart-breaking wars before the Lord, the Lord is now pleased by the glad tidings of the Gospell to give the will power not only to receive and entertain the Lord, but gladly to receive him. The soul wonders that ever the Lord should bow down to him, and offer mercy to him; and when as together with this, by the sweet savour of his Grace that he doth let into the heart, the soul doth receive the Lord with most dear imbracings into his soul, that now there is none like to the Lord. *Cant.* 1. 3. *Thy name is like an ointment poured out*, where *the very feet of the messengers of glad tidings are beautifull*: But the Lord himself is the only crown and Joy of the soul, when the least look of love to a castaway is more sweet than kingdomes, ay and much more, that's love it self. *Isaiah* 52. 9. *Break forth into joy, sing together ye waste places of* Jerusalem; *for the Lord hath comforted his people.* When kings shall stop their mouths as vile in themselves, and not able to set forth that glory they never heard of before, and the soul for joy sells away all to buy this pearl, that it sayes with *David*, *How do I love thy Law*! Now beloved when the soul does thus receive the Lord, the kingdome of God is come to that soul; and therefore try and examin, is it thus with you? or hath the Lord begun to deal thus with thee, to give himself, the glory of Angels, the wonderment of heaven, the mighty God of heaven, to come to thy heart? thou art then under the government of the kingdome of God. But now on the contrary, if thou canst be content to receive the ordinances of Christ, or the consolations of Christ, or some of the commands of Christ, and that is all, and the Lord never gave thee a heart to close with Christ himself, it's a strange thing to thee, that which is the main thing, the Diamond in the Ring of the Gospel; thou art yet far enough off from the kingdome of God; I dare not say, nor think for all the world, that ever the kingdome of God came to thy heart. Again, if you have received Christ, but not with thy whole soul: that now the offer, promises, blood, life, grace, glory in the Gospell, are grown common things to thee; that the Lord never sent thee home wondering at the glory of Gods grace to a poor wretch, never yet said'st, *Blessed is he that commeth in the name of the Lord*: the Lord never yet lay next thy heart, or if thou hast had some liking, and some love and affections in pangs; yet the Lord is not on-

ly precious, and exceeding dear in thy heart, thy heart breaks not for grief that thou hast so much slighted him, so little born him of thy heart; It is a sign that the Lord hath begun to reveal himself to thy soul, when he gives thee a heart to mourn for thy standing out against him, but this never came to thy soul.

Certainly, here is the wound of many men: The Gospell of God never hath its proper effect, till the Lord help thee to give thy whole heart thus to a Saviour, to a God, to the Prince of peace; and till this is done, the Gospel is ineffectuall, it doth nothing. It was a sweet prayer of him, Make thy Son dear, very dear, exceeding dear, only dear and precious, or not at all; If thou hadst a thousand hearts, it was too little for Christ to love him, and do'st grudge him one? when thou hast imparted thy heart, and esteem to thy lusts and creature, do'st thou love the Lord with part of thy heart? but a vile lust, a poor creature, must have a share, and the remnant will serve Christ, is he not the onely pearl of thy heart, to give him daily communion, know this thou art a stranger to. *Hear ye despisers, and wonder, and perish, God will work a work in your dayes.* What is that? the infinit God cannot express as it were the wrath that shall come against such a soul, nor I cannot expresse the wrath that shall come upon such a despiser of the Lord Jesus. Give him all thy heart or none: if thou hast the Lord, thou hast his whole heart; if he had a thousand lives, he would have laid them all down for thee: He poured out his bloud for every one of his, but for the present thou art out of the Kingdom of God to this day.

2. 2. When the whole soul closeth with the whole will of Christ, having thus received him, for if a Prince be come, and people will not be ruled by him, nor any laws that he makes, though never so good, but what they list, the Kingdome is cast off; For, beloved, there is a marvellous common deceit in mens hearts, they would not for all the world but have Christ; ay, but the will of Christ is neglected, that is a clog, and the burden of the Lord of Hosts; Christ is sweet and his will is bitter, Christ is precious, and his will is vile. Why do you make him a King, and ye will make lawes for Christ, and you will rule Christ, and his will shall not stand? here is no King; Such kind of idle Libertines were in the Apostles time, 1 *Joh.* 1.6. *If we say we have fellowship*

ſhip with him, and walk in darkneſs, we lie, and there is no truth in us: But now when the whole ſoul does ſubmit to the whole will of the Lord, now his Kingdome is come indeed, when his will is thus ſweet, *Dan.* 7. 27. *His Kingdome is an everlaſting Kingdome, and all nations ſhall ſerve him:* and *his ſervants ye are whom ye obey*, whether Chriſt, the devill, or your own hearts.

Now the whole wil of Chriſt is 1. Directing. 2. Correctin.

Now when the ſoul ſubmits to both, then Chriſt rules in his Kingdome; ſometime you meet with Chriſts directing will; now this is mens frame, naturally they will not ſee it, *they will not come to the light*, *John* 3. 20. they are led by their own counſell, and will not regard the light and counſell of God in his word; they will quarrell with the light when it is croſſe to their ends, gain, honour and the like; men have high thoughts againſt the Lord Jeſus, 2 *Cor.* 10. 5. *Caſting down imaginations, and every high thought that exalteth it ſelf againſt the knowledge of God.* And again, if men do ſee it, yet like the devill that has much light, they do not love it, nor out of love (not unleſſe it be out of fear) ſubject to it, like *Balaam* that had no love to Gods command, but onely was acted by fear and conſtraint; now when the ſoul continues thus, it caſts off Chriſts Kingdom; but if the whole ſoul *firſt* comes to the light, though it ſees little, ſets the whole will of Chriſt before it, *Pſal.* 18. 22. ſaith *David*; *I have kept the wayes of the Lord, and have not wickedly departed from my God:* and though it hath had many quarrellings againſt the truth of God, yet now it hath not, nor dares not, but ſayes, Lord, teach me; the Lord gives them hearts to lye down at the feet of any man that ſhall ſhew them any thing that is amiſſe in them, and they ſay with *David*, *Lord, ſearch me, and try me:* I have many crooked wayes, and therefore, good Lord, find them out, and therefore come to the Lord for that end; and though there be ſomething in them that is deſperately contrary to the good wil of God, yet there is an inward man that does delight in the law of God, and when the Lord is pleaſed to give them an heart to ſubmit to the will of God; Oh the ſoul doth wonder at the Lord, that the Lord ſhould ſhew him any thing, and help him againſt temptations; and though there be a great deal of wearineſſe in the wayes of God, yet there is a ſpirit within him, that it is indeed heaven it ſelf to him to be in the ordinances of God; now ye ſtoop

to the directing will of Christ, when this is thy way, though thou goest oft out of it, yet comest in it again, as sin is a wicked mans way, although he goeth a thousand times out of it.

Now for the other, the correcting will of Christ; The L. hath strong trials: Now here subjection to Christ is required as well as to the directing will of Christ; then the soul submits to this will when the mind objects not, charges not God with folly, as *Eli*, 1 Sam. 3. 18. *It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good*; And likewise the will, though it hath had many sad bouts, yet this is his frame in the Conclusion, that the wil of Christ is better than every thing else, the wil of Christ is alone sweet to him. *Isa.* 38. saith *Hezekiah*, *Good is the wil of the Lord*, & so *Lam.* 3. *It's good for a man to bear the yoke in his youth, and to turn his cheeks to him that smites him*; Nay when there is spiritual evils on the soul, as was on Christ himself, spiritual desertions, nothing but bitterness & sorrow; yet the soul saith, as Christ did, *Not my will, but thine be done, Father save me from this hour, yet Father glorifie thy self*, and so the soul does humbly submit it self to the Lord; though the Lord should never pitty it, yet it will lye down at the feet of the Lord, now is Gods Kingdome come.

But if the soul wil have Christ, and yet cast off the wil of Christ, 1. Either in his judgement, that the law of God as given by Christ, should be no rule to a Christian; suppose you were in *England*, and were there prest to bow before an Altar, or Image; what shall lead you, if that Gods will and law must not be your rule? The Lord will one day make you know his blessed will, in that blessed law of his, that ye shall never find peace to the end of the world, except the Lord do help ye thus to walk. Again, when men cannot endure the wil of Christ, cannot endure exhortations, what doth the man mean to exhort us thus? I tell thee, there goeth forth power with the exhortations of Christ. I say, take heed of casting off the will of Christ here; and so when men in their practice shall quarrel against any of Gods truths, and are loath to see it, or if they do, yet not love dearly every truth of God, but it's a burden to them; especially if it crosse their own ends and gain, they will not see it to be a truth, lest they should be convinced, and turn ro the rule of it; if the will and ordinances of Christ be a burden to a man, and a man is not weary of his wearinesse, but weary of them all the while:

while: Art thou under the government of Christ? If a man forsaken of God, led by his own counsels, be under the Kingdom of Christ, then thou art; so long as there is credit for the truth, so long it is entertained; but now suppose it be costly, that it should bring beggery & affliction with it, is it now sweet to you? doth this support thy heart? I am in Gods way, canst lye down and subscribe to the equity of Christs proceedings with thee, though he should never shew favour to thee; if it be not thus, I dare not say thou art under the Kingdome of Christ. And so for the correcting wil of Christ, many sad afflictions the Lord tries thee withall, the Lord tries men marvellously; when thou art under the hand of the Lord, those very things that should make men cry to heaven, and wean thee from the world, those very things do harden thee, and make thee grudge & repine. The L. be merciful to thee, if this be thy frame, the Kingdom of Christ never came into that heart; you are begging for mercy; & the Lord sayes, you mercy? you have abused it; no saith the Lord, Go to your lust that have despised the day of grace, & so now you cast off the Lord, because the Lord will not give you mercy when you would have it. Will you now quarrel with the Lord? no, down proud heart; pray still, and mourn still, and turn to the Lord; and say, Lord do with me what thou wilt, I am clay in thine hand, thou may'st make me a vessell of dishonour, *I* deserve not the least bit of bread; such a one as is above the Lord and his will, is not under the Lord, therefore submit thy self to the good will of Christ.

3. When the soul doth thus submit to the wil of Christ, by vertue of the power and Spirit of Christ, *i.e.* when the soul doth not submit by vertue of its own power, strength or ability, for this is forreign power; But as it doth seek to submit to the will of Christ, so it would have Christ himself act it and rule it, and so inable it to submit thereunto; Now is the Kingdome of God come neer to that heart. And herein Christs Kingdom is different from Princes, they give laws that men may keep them by their own might; hence they command no impossible things; but the will of Christ is so crosse to a carnal heart, that 'tis impossible man of himself should submit to it: But the Lord doth it for this end, that the soul should then come to Christ in its need, that he would do *all the good pleasure of his will*, and now the Lord himself reigns, and

and that gloriously, Ro. 8.1,2. *For the law of the Spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the law of sin and death*, Acts 5. 31. *A Prince and Saviour, for to give repentance and remission of sins.* It is part of his Princely power for to give remission of sins; both in turning from sin, and to God, and all the wayes of God, and now you exalt him when he is thus set up: 1 *Cor.* 4. 20. *The Kingdome of God is not in word, but in power.* The power of Christ Jesus is come into thy soul, and the soul is under the Kingdome of the Lord Jesus, when it doth lye under the mighty power of the Lord Jesus Christ, 2 *Thess.* 1.11,12. *We pray always for you, that the Lord would work and fulfill the good pleasure of his will, and the work of faith in power, that Christ may be glorified.* Yea, then is Christ glorified, when God omnipotent reigns over sin and unbelief; & when the Lord doth this, not only the Kingdome of God is now come, but the Kingdome of Christ in glory is come; there is many a poor soul thinks Christ rules him not, because he cannot do this nor that, because he finds his heart unable, & unwilling for to submit to the will of Christ; I find no strength at all, saith the soul, and I go to Christ and find not strength conveyed, and now he thinks he is not under the Kingdom of Christ. I answer, that is not the question; but hath the Lord made thee willing in the day of his power? when the soul doth lye under the power of the Lord Jesus Christ, when the soul doth lye like wax before the Lord Jesus; when the soul saith, Lord there was never any change of my nature; the good Lord change it, and if there be any change, the good Lord increase and stir up the graces of thy Spirit in my soul, and do thou lead me and guide me. Brethren, the Kingdome of Christ is come to this soul: *John* 5. 40. *You will not come to me for life*; He doth not say, you do not quicken your selves, or ye cannot come to me, but will not; here is their wound, they will not come to Christ for life, *Rom.* 6. 19. *As yee have yeelded your members servants to sin and Satan, so now yeeld up your selves servants to righteousnesse and to holinesse*, Psal. 119. 5,6. *Thou hast commanded that we should keep thy precepts continually. Oh that my heart were directed to keep thy precepts continually! Oh that my heart were directed to keep thy statutes!* When a Christian is grapling with his own heart, ye will never be able to overcome the unsubduednesse thereof; but when ye bring them to the

Lord

Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that he would take a courſe with them. 1. Now ye pleaſe Chriſt. 2. Ye take a ſure courſe to have the will of God done, he being in office for that end; for *Him hath God exalted to be a Prince and Saviour to Iſrael:* When the ſoul doth look up to the Lord Jeſus, and lye under the power and Spirit of the Lord Jeſus. 3. You now make the yoke of Chriſt ſweet, and his name glorious; nothing glorifies Chriſt ſo much as this, when Jeſus doth work in a Chriſtian, now the kingdome of Chriſt is come to the ſoul, and that in power.

But now when men will not ſubmit thus far to Chriſt: 1. They can do nothing, but will not come to him, on whom God hath laid ſalvation; you ſay, you cannot underſtand, nor edifie by the Sermons ye hear, and you cannot part with your luſts. Ay, but now this is thy condemnation, thou wilt not go to a Saviour that he may teach thee and help thee, when men will not have the Lord Jeſus to reign over them: or 2. If men do come, they will not come to him where he may be found; but ſay, I can do nothing; Chriſt muſt do all, and ſo neglect the means wherein he will be found: or 3. Will ſubmit and come in means to him, but not then at the ſpeciall time when He is to be ſought, and may be found, *viz.* in time of temptation. But then forget and forſake him, and cry not *Hoſanna:* Lord, now ſave, now help me againſt this luſt: When temptation comes, when paſſion and pride come, do you now go to Jeſus Chriſt? When the world begins to draw thy heart away; doſt thou ſay thus, Lord I have prayed this day againſt this ſin, and Lord I have no ſtrength againſt it, now Lord help me? but here is the miſery of the ſoul, it doth not go to Chriſt, and by this means live in complaints all their life-time. 4. If laſtly any thing be to be done, they will do it themſelves; as *Paul, Gal.* 1.12. Not but that a Chriſtian ſhould put forth himſelf, a Chriſtian is not a dead-hearted Chriſtian at all times, but the grace of God which comes from Chriſt, doth act the ſoul in a continuall dependance on Chriſt; and where Chriſt acts not, there Satan doth. Now I ſay the Kingdome of God is come, when the ſoul doth thus ſubmit to the ſtream of the bleſſed Spirit of the Lord, that the Lord may guide it. Oh beloved, here is the skill, that poſeth the Angels how to tell you; ſo to yield your ſelves to Chriſt, as that Chriſt may come, ſo to abide in the ſtock, that all your fruit may be from him:

So

So to lye under the Lord, as that the ſtream of the Spirit of life may fall on thee; ſo to be implanted in the Lord, as to fetch life from him, and bring forth fruit to him. But try this courſe, ſubmit to the will of the Lord Jeſus, be nothing in thy own eyes; and if the Lord do give thee any thing, bleſſe the Lord for it; if any ſtrength againſt thy ſin, be vile in thy own eyes, and try and ſee if ye find not the Kingdome of God, the glory of Heaven come into thy ſoul. Oh the light, life, prayers you might have, the heavenly conference ye will have together, that it would do a mans heart good to be with ſuch a Chriſtian; that thoſe that are with you might ſay, Verily God is in this man; verily there is joy in heaven when the Saints keep in this frame.

4. When the ſoul yields thus to the will of Chriſt for Chriſts ends; for ſuch is the ſubtill wretchedneſſe of mens hearts, that men would have Chriſt glorifie himſelf, that he may glorifie and honour them; like *Simon Magus*, that would give any money for Apoſtolicall gifts, that he might be ſome body that way alſo: Now if a man ſhall ſubmit, go to Chriſt for gifts and parts, that's to ſet up another King, to advance a mans ſelf; and ſo alſo ſin and the devill, and Chriſt muſt be made a ſervant for this end; He is now no King: like a Rebell that is not content, that thouſands of the Kings Subjects ſhould ſerve him, but he will have the Prince ſerve him alſo: Every man will ſay, this doth utterly overthrow the Kingdom of ſuch a Prince. When a man ſhall ſecretly fight againſt the Lord, and be for himſelf; and for the devil and ſin within; When a man ſhall make all the creatures ſerve him, the ſouldiers of his army; meat, drink, and outward comforts, this is a marvellous thing; Ay, but when a man ſhall make Jeſus Chriſt, & God himſelf, and profeſſion of Chriſt, make theſe to ſerve him, to raiſe up his name, this the Lord takes very ill.

Only this I would adde; when the ſoul doth look at Chriſt with a ſingle eye, that Chriſt is ſweet and precious, and lyes under the bleſſed Spirit of Chriſt for that end; and now looks up to Chriſt, that he may ſubmit to him with a ſingle eye, that the name of Chriſt may be glorified by life, and death: true it is, ſelf will be in every duty, and ſo is contrary to the Lord in all, and not for the Lord. Yet though it be thus, there is another thing in the ſoul that is wholly for God and

Chriſt:

Chriſt: and hence ſeeks that he may do his work; his heart loves him, and ſo ſeeks him; and he begs it with many tears. Oh that my children might ſerve and love this God; nay, that all the world might ſee, and bleſſe, and admire this God, and the Lord inlargeth his heart herein, *Pſal.* 72. 19. and truly now the Kingdom of God is come to thy ſoul, *Rom.* 5. 17. *As ſin* and Satan do *reign by death: So Jeſus Chriſt doth reign by life to eternall life.* Matth. 25. 14. He is the true Subject that improves his Talents for the King: Chriſt will ſubdue all his to himſelf, *Pſal.* 66. 3. *Through the greatneſſe of thy power, ſhall thine enemies ſubmit themſelves to thee.* Rom. 14. 17. *For the Kingdome of God is not in meat and drink; but in righteouſneſſe, and peace, and joy in the holy Ghoſt.* When a man ſhall be picking fault with things, & this and that offends him; get ye gone, the Kingdom of God conſiſts not in that. But when the ſoul do's go to the Lord, and maintain his peace with God, and love to the people of God, and joy in the holy Ghoſt, here is the Kingdome of God. *He that ſerves Chriſt in theſe things*, the Kingdome of God is come into his ſoul.

He that thus ſubmits to the Lord Chriſt, he muſt firſt be a man weary of his own counſels, and muſt loath himſelf: When the Lord hath wearied a man of his own wayes; he ſayes, What am I, that the Lord ſhould ſhew me any mercy? And when the Lord calls him to any ſervice; Lord, What am I, that I ſhould now pray to thee? Bleſs the Lord, when the Lord doth keep thy heart in this frame; but now when men will honour Chriſt, and yet *Saul*-like have Chriſt honour them: Many poor creatures they think it a credit to be in Church-fellowſhip, and they wil ſeek to know Chriſt, that they may attain Church fellowſhip, and have honour, but know it, till the Lord do pull down thy baſe ends, and make thee loath thy ſelf, and ſo to ſubmit to his bleſſed will; truly till then, the Kingdome of God is not come to thy ſoul: Think of theſe things, for if the Kingdome of God be in our hearts, then look for good dayes; Brethren, let *New-England* be confident of it: but if this be gone from the ſoules and hearts of men and women in their ſeverall families and places; though they may have the outward Kingdome of Chriſt, yet the inward Kingdome being not ſet up; I ſay no more but what he ſaid, Go to *Paleſtina* and *Bohemia*. Certainly, if they had not caſt off the Lords government,

they

they had never seen those lamentable dayes; they had outward Ordinances; Oh, but here was the thing, the inward Kingdome of the Lord Jesus Christ, and subjection to the will of the Lord Jesus, and to be for the Lord Jesus: this the Lord saw, was not in them, therefore the Lord hath left them to be lamentable spectacles. Therefore dear brethren. I do beseech you, pray and beg for this Kingdome: Thou sayest, I fall short of this: Know this Kingdome of God is at first like a grain of Mustard-seed, some little lying under the will of Christ; if it be in truth, blessed be God for it; The Kingdome of God is come, and the soul doth weep and mourn after the Lord, that the Lord would bring every thought into subjection.

Know it, the Kingdome of God is come to thy soul; and know it, thou hast Jesus Christ at the right hand of God the Father, interceding for thee; therfore, go home and blesse the Lord, and wonder at his grace, that hath translated thee from the Kingdome of darknesse, to the Kingdome of his dear Son: If the Lord hath let thee finde the beginning of these things in truth, go home, and blesse the Lord for it.

2. 2. Try when the externall Kingdome of Christ in his Church is cast off; for we told you, this was Christs kingdome. 'Tis called the Kingdome of Heaven, *Matth.* 25. 1. And 'tis it which the Lord gives up at the last day to God the Father: and hence, *Mat.* 8. 12. the members thereof are *The Children of the Kingdome*; and hence we read of the rulers and governours of it; and the keys, not only of doctrine; but of power and jurisdiction committed by Christ Jesus to it, punctually expresst in Scripture.

Now we know, in the Church there is a three-fold power of Christ in Government: 1. The supreme Monarchicall absolute power of Christ, in and by his Ordinances. 2. There is some derivative power of the Church from Christ joyntly together. 3. There is a Ministeriall power of the officers of the Church it self. Hence the Kingdome of Christ is overthrown when these three are, when this three-fold cord is broken by the sons of men; and if whole *America* cast off these, or any of these; then they fall to bondage; and if particular persons in Churches do, the Lord will do the like to them much more. 1 *Kings* 9. 4, 5. When *Solomon* had been praying much, the Lord tells him; *If he would walk before him as* David

vid *his father had done, to keep his ſtatutes and obey his commandments; then he would be a God, making good his promiſe; but if not, then the Lord would caſt off him and that place.* So Zach. 14. 17. *And it ſhall be, that who ſo will not come up of all the families of the Earth, to worſhip the King the Lord of Hoſts; even upon them ſhall be no rain.* The Lord is quick in his judgements, and will ſpare none.

1. There is a ſupreme power of Jeſus Chriſt in his Church and Ordinances thereof, *Iſa.* 9. 6. *The Government is on his ſhoulders*; it is true this power is on others alſo, but he is the main, *Heb.* 3. Moſes *was only a ſervant in his Houſe*, Chriſt *as a Son.* The guidance of all things in the Church doth lye chiefly on him, or elſe it would never be carried along. Chriſt is a Son, and that in his own Houſe; into whoſe hands the ſupreme power of guiding, and ordering all things in the Church of God is put; the experience of Gods Saints and People doth find another power, which ſhewes that the Lord Jeſus hath, and doth exerciſe a mighty power in the ordinances of his Worſhip; the ſupreme and kingly power which he exerciſeth in the hearts of his people.

Now caſt off this kingly power, the Lord himſelf is caſt off; I ſpeak not immediately as in the internall Kingdom, but mediately. And for this, the Lord will bring into bondage, *Luk.* 19. 17. *Thoſe mine enemies*, ſaith Chriſt: *which would not that I ſhould reign over them; bring them hither, that I may ſlay them*; which is meant of the Lords external adminiſtration by his ſervants.

Queſt. When is this done? *Queſt:*

Anſw. 1. When men impenitently break Covenant made with the Lord. Eſpecially in his Ordinances of cleaving and ſubmitting to him therein, and remain ſo with impenitency. *Anſw.* 1.

This is the main and firſt Original of all the reſt. Now it is manifeſt, the power of Chriſt Jeſus, the ſupreme power of Chriſt is caſt off; for a man do's profeſſe by this, that not the will of Chriſt, but his own will ſhall rule him; Chriſt ſhall not be Lord, but as they ſaid, *Jer.* 2. 31. *We are Lords, we will come no more at thee.* When the League and Covenant between Prince and People is broke, then he is caſt off from being King; this is certain, the Lord never did receive any people to himſelf from the beginning of the world to this day, but he hath done it by ſome Covenant; Nor never any people took the Lord

Lord to be their God, but by ſome Covenant, they bound themſelves to the Lord. Whereby they were either made his people, or continued to be his people, and he their God; but I cannot now ſtand to clear this. Now look, as when the Lord breaks his Covenant, he caſts them off from being his people; (though this he never doth to the Elect) So when people break Covenant with him, they caſt him off as much as in them lies, from being their God; they do as much as in them lyes, make the Lord to be no God. You ſhall ſee therefore, *Hoſea* 10. 3. *They ſay, we have no King; becauſe we feared not the Lord.* It is the ſpeech of Conſcience, and that at a ſad time, wherein they did not fear the Lord; *They have ſpoken words, ſwearing falſly, and breaking the Covenant.* In their time of Covenanting with the Lord, there ſeemed to be much ſorrow and humiliation; yet in theſe very Covenants, *Hemlock did ſpring up*, and hence captivity came. Many times the Covenants that are made, there is ſuch outward ſeeming reality, that not only men, but the Lord ſpeaking after the manner of men; He thinks certainly theſe Promiſes, theſe Covenants will never be broke; yet they are broken, *Iſa.* 65. 8, 9, 10. *I ſaid, ſurely*, ſaith the Lord; *This is a people that will not lie.* Such profeſſion, and ſuch acknowledgements, &c. ſo it is ſaid; *In all their afflictions, he was afflicted, and the Angel of his preſence did redeem them: But* afterward, *they rebelled, and vexed his holy Spirit:* They caſt off the Government of the Lord, they would not be under the bonds of the Lord, and *ſo he was turned to be their enemy*; this is that which brings captivity and bondage, *Jerm.* 2. 14, 15, *&c. Is Iſrael a ſervant ſaith the Lord?* ye ſhall ſee the reaſon why he was ſo; *I have broken their iron yoke*, ſaith the Lord, *and I have burſt thy bonds, and I have planted thee a noble Vine; yet haſt thou degenerated*: and this is that which doth make them vaſſals or ſlaves. And in truth you never ſee Churches laid deſolate; but when that time comes, men ſhall ſee, and ſhall profeſſe it. When other Nations ſhall ask; Why hath the the Lord dealt thus with his people? The anſwer ſhall be clear; They have broken the Covenant of the Lord. When many miſeries come upon particular perſons, what is the cauſe of it? then remember the Covenant thou haſt broken with the Lord. *Iſa.* 24. 5, 6. *They have tranſgreſſed the Law*, ſpeaking of the whole earth; *And they have changed their Ordinances*,

Ordinances, and broken the everlasting Covenant. A people that might have had everlasting mercy, they would not submit to the Lord, they have broken this everlasting Covenant of the Lord: Now what follows? *The earth is defiled under the inhabitants thereof*; and hence heavy things that are there written, shal befall the whole world; It is a sin that defiles the earth men tread on, and the houses men inhabite in, for it is a sin against most light: They which make Covenants have a great deal of light, and also most will. And that do's aggravate a sin; when the whole heart, as it were, do's give up it self to a lust, and breaks hereby all bonds. And it is a sin that men might avoid, if they would be watchfull against: For it is a sinfull thing to make a Covenant of impossible things, therefore it lyes heavy on the conscience of men afterwards; I might have been better, & might have walked better; Nay, it is a sin that do's destroy the Law of the Lord: this sin it do's destroy the very will of Christ. Had'st thou never been bound in Covenant; hadst thou laid by this Covenant, the wil of God had been kept whole. As cords not used, are kept whole; but when broke, are utterly spoiled. When a man do's bind himself by a Covenant to the Lord, and then break it; he do's as much as in him lyes, to destroy the Lord from being King.

'Tis true, the Saints and people of God may be said in some case to break Covenant, but yet they never impenitently break Covenant with the Lord; they may break Covenant with the Lord very often, but yet it is with them as those in *Judges* 2. 1, 4. When the Angel of the Lord came to them, and they were under grievous sad bondage; saith he to them from the Lord: *I have brought you up out of the land of* Egypt, *and I have broke your bonds; and I have said, I would never break Covenant with you: & I said, you should make no League with the* Canaanites, *but ye have not obeyed my voyce; why have ye done this?* And all the people heard this; and it is said, *All the people wept.* Doubtlesse some were sincere, though happily many were full of hypocrisie; and so the sincere heart laments it, and renewes his Covenant. The poor soul hath nothing to say many times, though the Lord should bring never so much misery on it; yet the soul stands weeping before the Lord, that it hath broke the Covenant of the Lord, and made void the Covenant of the Lord; yet the Saints they never break it wholly, they never depart wholly from the Lord.

Now when a people shall impenitently break Covenant, as hath been said: that men can study arguments, how to nullifie Church-covenant; nay, worse when in Covenant, then ever before; and the businesse is, they are loath to be in bonds; when men shall grudge the truth of the Lord, others if their judgements be not set against it; yet notwithstanding, in deed and practice, they live as if they had never been in Covenant. Once they were a pleasant plant; but now they are degenerated, as the Lord doth there complain. Beloved, when it is thus, the League between the Prince of peace, and the Church is broke; they do as much as in them lies, seek to cast off the Lord from ruling over them.

2. 2. When there be additions made to the Ordinances of Christ, by humane ordinances and inventions of men; let any set up new ordinances, new inventions of men, they set up new gods; and they do as Subjects set up new Kings, which is indeed to pull down him that was; and so they do to Jesus Christ; they do deny the supreme headship of Christ, and his authority over them; though it may seem a small thing, yet thus it is: And hence ye shall observe *Jeroboams* calves, though they worshipped the same God which was at *Jerusalem*, varying only in circumstance; yet the Lord professeth, that *they had set up new Gods*, and so indeed did pull down the true God and his government from over them, and this brought bondage. And henee, *Col.* 2. 18, 16. *Let no man beguile you of your reward with a voluntary humility*, saith the Apostle, *and worshipping of Angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, &c.*

Whatsoever pretence be upon the inventions of men, take heed of that; if it be the *inventions of men*, in *Vers.* 19. *and not holding the head*; the very headship of Christ is denied, and the ground is this; To say that Christ is is not a sufficient means of salvation, of saving his people, and ruling his people; it is to deny the headship of Christ: and likewise to say, that Christ hath not appointed for his people sufficient means for that end; is to say, that Christ is not a sufficient means to rule his people; and he that shall say, Jesus Christ is not a sufficient means, he do's deny the headship of Christ. Now to set up any inventions of men in the worship of God, to be a means to carry the heart to God, is to say, that Jesus Christ hath not appointed sufficient means for that end; and there-

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fore he is not a ſufficient means of guiding, and ſaving, and ruling his people. Nay, this I will adde; let there be any invention added to the worſhip of God, that's meerly the will of man; nothing elſe, but only this I would have ye do it; they are ſuch things as do neither make a man better nor worſe, but only uſe them, and ye are commanded to uſe them, and nothing but the will of man: This is to ſet up a new Chriſt, and to pull down the power of Chriſt Jeſus, to ſubmit herein to the authority of man, meerly becauſe of the will of man, that there is nothing ſeen but his will: There is (it may be) neither good nor hurt in it; It is to make that man a God and Chriſt; it is peculiar to Chriſt to do it, and this do's pull down the Lord Jeſus Chriſt from his throne; when there is adding to the worſhip of the Lord. I need not I ſuppoſe ſpeak any thing this way; Only remember to be watchfull againſt this; when the Lord doth ſend tentations this way into Churches, or into any place; be watchfull againſt new inventions of men to be added or made, they are very ſinfull; and if ye ask me when we ſhall look for ſuch times; I need not go far from my Text.

It is ſaid, that *Rehoboam and all the people walked in the worſhip of the Lord three years*; but in one year, *Rehoboam* and all the people fell off from the worſhip of the Lord. O therefore take heed of this, when the tentation comes: 1. When the Lord bows the hearts of thoſe in authority, men of eminency to fall this way, then multitudes follow; as, *verſ.* 1. *Rehoboam* ſinned and *Iſrael* with him. 2. When perſecution ariſeth for the truth, *Gal.* 5. 12. *They muſt be circumciſed to avoid perſecution*, 3. When mens hearts are ſurfetted with the Ordinances of God, and weary of them; when the Ordinances of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, men find no benefit by them, the heart of man will then be making out after ſome thing of its own; then we muſt look for Apoſtles, Prophets, and Evangeliſts, and this curioſity, and the other nicity; then a conceit and imaginary picture of a mans own, is more beautifull than all Gods Ordinances beſides, and all Religion is placed there; it may be in extending too far any Ordinance it ſelf, though it may ſeem little at firſt; yet when it is thus, then look for evil times.

3. When as a people ſeek to aboliſh and deſtroy any Ordinance of Chriſt, but eſpecially if on this ground;

either becauſe of ſome outward evill they bring with them, in the fruition of them, or hope of ſome outward good they ſhall receive by caſting them off, or becauſe of no good they reap by the enjoyment of them: Whenſoever ye ſee this, that they are caſt off on this ground, then look for bondage; for it will come on whole Countreys in generall, and on particular perſons: For Jeſus Chriſt is in his Ordinances, and his Throne is not only in Heaven among the Angels; but, *Iſa.* 9. 7, 8, 9. *He ſits on the throne of David*, among his Church and People; and pull theſe down, you pull down Chriſts throne, *the Prince of peace*; when ye pull down his Ordinances. 1 *John* 2. 19. there were many that did ſeem to be for Chriſt, and yet againſt Chriſt, this is one ſign by which he notes them; *They went out from us, for they were not of us: that it might be made manifeſt they were not of us.* Now I ſay, when men ſhall pull down the Ordinances of Chriſt, and withdraw themſelves from the communion of Saints; and when it is for one of theſe ends, in regard of ſome outward evill that the Ordinances do bring with them, or ſome outward good they ſhall get by caſting them off; then certainly look for bondage. As a Prince that hath one near him, he may attempt change of things in State; but when he is ſet a work by a forein State, and is a penſioner to the *Pope* or *Spaniard:* Now he is reall to root out the Prince; and this provokes.

So here many times a Chriſtian, he may in conſcience ſpeak againſt ſome of the wayes of the Lord, and this may be the condition of the Saints and people of God, and they may ſpeak it in conſcience; and this may be tolerated, when it is for want of light; nay, they may through ſtubbornneſſe of ſpirit, caſt off Ordinances; but when now it is for this reaſon, though he hath indeed his colours for it; you ſhall, ſaith Satan, have this gain, and this eaſe, and theſe conveniences; and what do you do with Ordinances? and now a man begins to find out argments; and ſaith, Satan, If ye attend to the enjoyment of Ordinances, here be theſe miſeries, therefore away with ſome of Gods Ordinances at leaſt. Oh, brethren, when it is thus, that there is this ſecret penſion from the world, that now had the Lord Jeſus, the honours of the world attending on them, then they could make much of them; but becauſe they come with poverty, therefore they

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can plot and ſpeak againſt them, and in time come to caſt off the Ordinances of the Lord Jeſus; It is certain the Lord hath bondage for ſuch ſoules, and you will certainly find this true one day. *Mal.* 3. 14, 15. The people, they ſay; *What profit is it that we have ſerved the Lord, and that we have walked mournfully before him?* and hence, they forſook the Lord; Hence, *Chap.* 4. 1. the Lord threatens, that *He will burn them up, both root and branch.* The Lord hath conſuming fire for ſuch one day.

The Ordinances of the Lord were too coſtly for you. *Mark* 12. 7, 8. *The Lord hath his Vine-yard, he lets it out to husbandmen, and he ſends for the fruit; and at laſt the Son himſelf comes to call for fruit.* Now ſay they; *Here is the ſon, let us kill him.* Why, what is the matter? out of gain, that is the buſineſſe; *That the inheritance may be ours.* Here is this gain to be without them, and therefore to caſt off Chriſt: *What will the Lord do to theſe husband-men, he will take away his Vine-yard frrom them, &c.*

It is the ſpeech of *Luther, Venter in omni religione potentiſſimum Idolum*: When the Belly is ſerved, Chriſt muſt be deſtoyed. Men may have this quiet life without theſe Ordinances; and hence men bear a privy grudge againſt the Ordinances of the Lord, becauſe the belly is not ſerved. Look as it was with the Jews; they looked for a glorious King to come to them, and Chriſt came; and though they were told of it before; when he came, he had nothing but his Croſſe; and he tels them, *If they will be his Diſciples, they muſt take his Croſſe.* But now, becauſe he came not with pomp, but only with his croſſe, this is the great reaſon, why to this day the Jewes do ſet themſelves againſt the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; the Croſſe came with Chriſt, that's the cauſe of it: So when men ſhall look for great things from the Ordinances of Chriſt, and when they come to enjoy them, they meet with nothing elſe but Chriſt and his Croſſe, and diſappointments, and deſertions; when they meet with this, then Chriſt is caſt off, and they profeſſe he is no King, and *Ceſar* is our King: and if we take this man to be our King; the *Romanes* will ruine us.

I know it is a hard trial for a man to be put to ſuch a ſtrait; for the Lord to advance the price of his Ordinances at that high rate, that all muſt be parted with for the enjoyment of them. But yet notwithſtanding, he is for ever unworthy to have the Lord Jeſus to rule him,

that shall therefore make him a King as they did, *John 6.* He was their Cook, therefore they made him King. Therefore this I say, take heed of disputing against, or denying, or nullifying, not only outwardly, but in thy very heart secretly, any of Gods Ordinances: for that the Lord complains of his people, that *their hearts went after their wickednesse.* Oh take heed of doing thus against any one of Gods Ordinances, because straits do attend on them: It was the speech of *David*, Ps. 119. *Thy law is pure, therefore thy servant loveth it.* Suppose thou shouldest never get any good by any of Gods Ordinances; yet *thy law is pure*, the fault is in thy own heart; and certainly the Lord he will remember, as there he speaketh, *Jerem. 2. 2. I remember the love of thine espousals, when thou didst follow me in a land of barrennesse, in a land where there was no water.* Thy life shall be precious to the Lord, that shall follow the Lord in all afflictions; yet thy heart doth cleave to the Lord, and follow the Lord in all his Ordinances; therefore this is that I would say, there are many wants now in the countrey; But yet notwithstanding, let the people of God get neer to Christ; *speak often one to another*, and find out wayes and means to pay your debts, and lye down at the feet of the Lord Jesus, and be content if the Lord will have it so, to be nothing, be content thus; and though thou dost not find any benefit from the Ordinance of the Lord as yet, yet notwithstanding loath thy own heart, but love them; yet seek after the Lord, and look to the Lord in them. And this is certain, the Lord hath blessings for his people; not only in this life, but as he there speaketh to his Disciples, when they say to him, *Lord, what shall we have?* saith the Lord to them? *You that have followed me, you shall sit on thrones.* But take heed of this, if once ye come to slight Ordinances, and cast off Ordinances, because of these straits and wants, and so forth: And what are your Ordinances, &c? and a generation of men risen up (I think Christians should send forth their gronings to the Lord, that the terrour of the Lord may fall upon them) they deny all the Ordinances of the Lord, and the Spirit must teach us only. 'Tis true, the Spirit must do it, but will ye therefore take away the means? and hence, the very Scripture is made an Alphabet for children, and so they do destroy the Ordinances of the Lord. Beloved, if it be from this principle, take heed of it; for if it be, ye will certainly find bondage.

4. When men do not thus pull down the Ordinances, the throne of Christ; but drive the Lord Jesus away out of his Ordinances, (though they have his Ordinances with them) by their secret defilings, pollutions, spiritual pollutions of the glorious Ordinances of Christ; this the Lord frequently complaineth of in *Jerem.* and *Ezek.* The very great reason why the Lord did leave his Temple, where their fathers did praise the Lord: they had polluted and defiled it, that was the reason of it: They had driven the Lord away from his throne, and this doth pull down the princely power of the Lord in his Churches. I know, there be many sins and defilements; and the sons of men have hidden wayes of polluting the Ordinances of the Lord, that a man shall sit under all the Ordinances of the Lord; and as it is said of Mount *Gilboah*, not any dew fall upon him; never see good, when good comes; the Lord is not dear, that is the reason of it. Oh, thy secret defilements of the Ordinances of the Lord, have driven the Lord far from you. There are many, I shall only name three principally, that there may be a little heed taken of them. 4.

First. When there is a secret contempt grown upon a mans spirit of the Ordinances of Christ, attended with a secret wearinesse of them: this doth now pollute the Ordinances of the Lord, and this doth drive the Lord from his Ordinances: *Mal.* 1. 7. *Ye have offered polluted bread; wherein have we done it*, say they? this was the cause of it; *Ye say, that the Table of the Lord is contemptible*; the meaning is, you do despise my Table and Ordinances, and so now do despise me too, and so ye do vilifie and contemne the Ordinances of the Lord: Therefore saith the Lord, in the conclusion of that *Chapter, vers.* 11. *From the rising of the Sun, my name it shall be known.* As if he should say, I am not bound to you, I can have a people, among whom my name shall be great; For, saith the Lord, *I am a great King.* If one should have asked men in those dayes what good is in your sacrifices? what great glory can ye see in them? the Saints can see a great deal of glory in mean outsides: Now when this is wanting, the name of the Lord is polluted, and so the Lord driven from his Ordinances. *Heb.* 12. 15. *Take heed, lest there be in any of you an evil root of bitternesse springing up, and many thereby be defiled.* When men do live in secret lusts, or open prophaneness; a man that hath a prophane heart, such a heart as 1.

doth contemne the portion of mercy the Lord doth offer to him; who like *Esau* did sell his birth-right for a messe of pottage.

2. Secondly, Unbrokennesse of heart in the enjoyment of Ordinances, when men live not in a daily sense of the extreme need they stand in of mercy; *Isa. 66. 1, 2. Heaven is my throne, and the Earth is my foot-stool*; Now observe what the Lord doth there speak, *To him will I look that is poor in spirit & contrite*; such a poor soul, saith the Lord, will I look to; and to these are opposed, such as have not such hearts, but do look only to the Ordinances of the Lord: Now, saith the Lord to such; *He that offereth a lamb, is as if he cut off a dogs neck; and he that offereth incense, as he that blesseth an Idol.* These were a people that did plead for the Temple of the Lord, and had the Ordinances of the Lord according to his command; but here was their wound, they were not broken under the Ordinances of the Lord: This you shall find, the Saints have many sins and wants under the Ordinances of the Lord: but little does the world know their gronings before the Lord, and the Lord hath mercy for such soules as are sensible of their need they stand in of the Ordinances of the Lord.

But now when men have found the Lord in an Ordinance subduing some particular sin: there are other sins remaining in their hearts, and they stand unremoveable in their hearts; and hence, are the strongest and deerest of all the rest: Now, I say, when men having these sins, and knowing these sins in their hearts and spirits; when as, because I cannot subdue these sins; and they have attended on the Lord in the use of meanes, and the Lord helps them not; and because, they hope to be saved at last for all these: Hence they come to a truce with their sin, and never go mourning to the Lord; nor say, the Lord hath begun to subdue some of these lusts: Now Lord, go on, but the soul is at truce with his sinnes. Beloved, if there be any pollution of the Ordinances of the Lord, here it is; that men come with unbroken hearts to the Ordinances of the Lord; that never feel your need of them, & wounds and sores that are in your hearts, that men do stand with those very sins, that they think they cannot subdue; and because, they cannot ease themselves of them, therefore they give way to them. When

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men keep theſe ſins with unſenſible hearts of them, ye do reſiſt the holy Ghoſt, ye feel not your need of the Lord; therefore ye keep your ſins, and your woes you ſhall have for them.

Thirdly, Where there is a ſpirit of unbelief, that there is not a ſeeking to Chriſt Jeſus, to waſh away the pollutions of his heart and life, in his attending upon the Lord in his Ordinances. *Tit.* 1. 15. *To the unbelieving nothing is pure; but even their mind and conſcience is defiled.* *Exod.* 30. 29. It is ſaid, *Every thing that touched the Altar, was clean*; and hence, without this, all is unclean: When a poor ſoul ſhall come to the Lords Ordinances, and prepare himſelf before he come; and in all, it hath many weakneſſes, yet it doth leave it ſelf with Jeſus Chriſt; every thing that doth touch this Altar, is ſanctified, and is not polluted. But now when men ſhall enjoy Ordinances, and make no great matter of ſins in Ordinances; eſpecially if ſecret: ſuch is the venemous nature of ſin, it doth defile the earth a man doth tread on: Now when men ſhall have theſe ſins, and know them, and yet never leave themſelves with Chriſt, and lay themſelves on this bleſſed Altar by faith; they do pollute the Ordinances of the Lord. 3.

Fourthly, When the ſoul doth not ſo openly, manifeſtly drive away the Lord; but when men ſhall come to the Ordinances, and never come to the Lord Jeſus in them; now the Lord is caſt off. A great Prince that comes to a mans houſe, though he be not driven out of doors; yet if not attended on, he accounts himſelf caſt off. The Lord Jeſus Chriſt is in his Ordinances, *Ezek.* 48. 35. *The Lord is there*; the Saints, they come to God in them, and are carried to him by them: Therefore, 'tis ſaid, *Acts* 10. 33, 34. *Now therefore, we are all preſent before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God*, and Pſal. 84. 7. *Every one of them in* Sion *appeareth before God.* Now the Saints and people of God, when they do thus come to the Lord, they find many difficulties to break through, *a vally of Baca.* Sometimes their heart is turned from the Lord, and ſometimes God is turned from them: ſo that now, the Saints when they do come to the Lord in his Ordinances; *They go through the vallie of Baca*, that they may ſee God in *Sion.* But now, when men do never break through difficulties, but give way to a ſluggiſh heart; when it is 4.

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thus with a people, it is certain the Lord is now cast off; and ye do as good now as live without Christ in the world. *Amos* 5. 21. saith the Lord, *I hate your new Moons, and Sabbaths; For these forty years ye never sacrificed to me*, vers. 25. Did they not sacrifice those forty years to the Lord in the wildernesse? It was the very thing they came out of *Egypt* for, that they might sacrifice to the Lord: Yet saith the Lord, ye did not sacrifice to me; truly here was the thing, they did sacrifice, but to enjoy communion with a God, that they did not; the Lord he saw none of that, and this is the frame of many a man, ye never heard a Sermon; ye never broke through your difficulties to come to a God in Ordinances: therefore, in truth, though you had them, yet it is as if you never had them; because, ye never did enjoy the Lord in them.

Therefore, this is that I would say: Oh, Brethren, let the Saints, let it be the care of all the faithfull and people of God; the first thing that ye do, before ye come to hear a Sermon, or receive a Sacrament, or to any Christian communion, or other Ordinance of God: Before thou do'st come, indeavour it at least to bring thy soul to a God, to Christ, above all Ordinances, and break through the difficulties; heart is dead, and minde is blind, and God is gone; but yet break through difficulties, and wrestle with the Lord in Prayer, and then ye wil find the blessing of the Lord. The great reason why we enjoy not that mighty presence of the Lord in his Ordinances, it is this; Men come to Ordinances, and would enjoy Ordinances, but they never broke through difficulties, to come to a God: When men shall come to Ordinances only, (& blessed be God we have the temple of the Lord;) truly this wil do you no good in the world.

5. The 5th Degree of calling off the supreme power of Christ in his Ordinances; many times when the soul cannot come to Christ, the Lord comes to it: Now then the supreme power of Christ is cast off, when the soul is unwilling or careless, to receive the stroke of the Eternall power of the life of Jesus into his heart; but contents himself with some beginnings, some sips and tastes, and doth not lye under the stroke of the eternall Spirit of the life of Christ.

Look as it is with a company of Subjects, they are in some great Town, that stands it out against a Prince; If

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the Prince ſend to them, and they parlie with him, and they are thankfull for his gifts, and glad of his parly; but yet notwithſtanding, they are unwilling to receive the Prince, with all his power to come into the Town; if they be unwilling to do that, and are loath to joyn ſides againſt the other party, they caſt him off from being King: So it is here, when men come to the Lord in Ordinances, the Lord he parlies with them, the Lord he ſends promiſes, and they are marvellous precious things; and they have ſome taſte of what the Lord do's ſend, and it is ſweet to them; But now, becauſe they have luſts in their hearts; the Lord ſaith, make warre againſt thy luſt, and open the gates that I may come in: If ſo be, a man now out of ſecret love to his ſin, he content himſelf with the promiſes of Chriſt; but the life of Chriſt, he cares not for that, he uſes not all means that he may find that, the ſupreme power of the Lord Jeſus is now caſt off, and I know no difference between ſuch a people and *Capernaum*; they did enjoy the Goſpell of God, but now to entertain the Lord Jeſus in his ſpirituall power, this they were loath to come to; therefore, ſaith the Lord, *Wo to thee Capernaum*; the mighty work of Jeſus Chriſt in their hearts, this they never cared for, Saith the Apoſtle, 2 Cor. 10. 5. *The weapons of our warfare, they are mighty through God.* As poor things as you think the Ordinances of the Lord to be, they are mighty through the Lord: When Chriſtians ſhall not be willing to receive this mighty power of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt truly, now the Kingdome of Chriſt is caſt off. *John 6. 49. Your fathers ate Manna in the Wilderneſſe, and are dead*, that was outward Manna; but he that eateth me, ſhall live for ever.

In one word thus; this is certain, a man never gets good by any Ordinance, nor the Lord Jeſus doth never attain his end in any Ordinance, till there be an everlaſting power and life of Chriſt Jeſus communicated by the Ordinance. *There*, ſaith he, *God commandeth his bleſſing, life for evermore*; mercy, for ever comforting; and light, for ever teaching; and humbling, for ever continuing: and a man will never think he doth receive any good till he doth it. For if a man be healed of his blindneſſe, and be blind preſently again; what is he the better? So, if a man hath ſome flaſh of light in the Ordinance, bleſſe the Lord for it. The Lord quickens up the heart to walk with the Lord, Bleſſed be the Lord for it: Ay, but *Pſal.* 133. *ult.*

but when the heart now shall lose that life, and strength which it had, (not but that a Christian do's lose to his feeling, but it will return again.) When he is a hearing, some affection, but he goes away dead as hee came: no, but when the Lord comes by his everlasting power and mercy, and life in any Ordinance; now Christ comes in his power, and now ye receive the King in his power, and Christ attains his end in the Ordinance. This is all that I would say, I do beseech you brethren, in the Lord Jesus Christ; Oh seek for this blessed life, everlasting life Lord, everlasting power Lord; beg for that, and seek for that, and pray for that, and weep for that; do not content thy self with sippings and tastings, look for everlasting life and power to come with the Ordinance; though means be weak in themselves, do not therefore vilifie them: Look upon the brazen serpent, what a poor thing was that to heal the people that were stung? yet the institution of Christ did put vertue into it: So do thou attend on the Ordinances, and never be content, till thou dost find the Lord, and feel the Lord, and say as some have said; though I feel not the Lord now as I have done, yet I think I shall for ever blesse the Lord. Never be content till ye find the Lord bringing your heart to this passe, and then the King of glory, the Prince of peace is come; though ye find not the same power at all times, yet if ye finde that power which do's inure your heart for ever to blesse the Lord, here *is* everlasting power. Jesus is now come to thy soul; Ay, but when ye content your selves with some movings and beginnings; and sin and Satan as strong again as ever, and ye find not your sin wasting and consuming; in truth the Lord Jesus is cast off, and ye have not the end for which ye come to the Ordinances of the Lord. But then, ye are blessed for ever when ye find this.

2. 2. There is a derivative power of Christ to the Church, joyntly considered together. *Mat.* 18. 17. *Go and tell the Church*, is the highest tribunal Christ hath on earth in the Kingdome of Saints, 'Tis Christs high Court of Parliament, beyond which there is no appeal to any higher power than the Church; and it cannot be meant of the Officers of the Church (which is the fairest interpretation.) For the case may be that there is but one Officer, and is he the Church? as also that he may sin, and not

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hear of his ſin, and muſt they leave him to himſelf, at leaſt to judge of his ſin? They power of Keys was given to *Peter*, *quia fidelis*, and the power to bind and looſe to *two or three gathered together in Chriſts name*, *Mat.* 18. but theſe things are known.

For the clearing up of this, know that there is a three-fold derivative power, which the Lord hath given to the Church joyntly, and not to Elders only: Which may be miſerably abuſed, and ſo provoke the Lord to take it away from their hands till they know better how to uſe it; yet when 'tis uſed according to Chriſt, now not to be under the power of it, which is Chriſt, power delegated to it, is to caſt off Chriſts Government. And I am confident, the bondage of all the Churches in Chriſtendome, if ye examine the Churches, is continued, becauſe the Lord ſees hearts unwilling to ſubmit to him in the government of Churches; and will continue it till Churches know how to uſe it, and men lye down to the power of it.

1. They have a power given them from Chriſt, of opening and ſhutting the doors of the Church, the Kingdome of God on earth: *i. e.* of letting in, and keeping out any according to Chriſt; into, or out of their communion: and this I conceive to be one part of the power of the Keys, committed to the Church: The chief office of which, is to open and ſhut; to receive in, and keep out according to Chriſt; and hence the three thouſand were added to the Church, though the Apoſtles were guides therein: and *Acts* 9. 26. *Paul* would have joyned himſelf, but they would not accept of him; becauſe, they were afraid of him. No body naturall or politick, but they have power to receive to them the uſefull, & keep from them the hurtfull; ſo, much more Chriſts ſpirituall body. And hence, the Church of *Epheſus* is commended, *Revel.* 2. 2. together with their Angel, *for trying thoſe that ſeemed good, and were not.* 1:

Now 'tis true, this power may be miſerably abuſed in opening doores too wide, or locking them up too long, or too faſt; and in many ſad diſorders this way, yet there is this power. Now when men ſhall refuſe Church-tryall, and ſo communion with the Church; and that not from ſenſe of their unfitneſſe and unworthineſſe, or ſome other reaſon, which is in the ſight of God

God of great weight; but from a careleſſe contempt of Gods Ordinances, or Gods people; a man ſayes, What care I for the one? and what are the other? and from a reſolution never to grow better; they know they are not like to be accepted of them, and they are reſolved they will grow no better; they think themſelves as good as they, and from a ſecret unwillingneſſe to come to the light, they know things are amiſſe, and will not be known of it; they appear better than they are, and hence they are loath to be ſeen and judged as they are: Certainly, this is to caſts Chriſts power; and if continued in, the ſalvation of your ſoules is alſo caſt off: *Acts 2. ult. The Lord added to the Church daily, ſuch as ſhould be ſaved.* To the Church. *i. e.* not the univerſal Church, but viſible Church, where it may be had; *ſuch as ſhould be ſaved.* Iſa. 60. 14, 15. *For the Nation and Kingdome that will not ſerve thee, ſhall periſh; yea, thoſe Nations ſhall utterly periſh:* Lamentable is the condition of many; not ſo much for not joyning themſelves to the Church, as not ſeeking of the Lord for that mercy; that they may be firſt joyned to the Lord, and ſo to his people for the Lords ſake.

There are great heaps of people amongſt the Churches here that do ſtand guilty of this, the Lord humble us for it; that content themſelves to ſtand *Aliens from the Common-wealth of* Iſrael, *Eph.* 2. 12. *Strangers from the Covenant of Promiſe; having no hope, and without God in the world.* The Lord is ſlow to wrath; but there is a threefold bondage. 1. Of ſin and Satan. *Rev.* 22. 14, 15. *Let him that is filthy, be filthy ſtill;* Nay, though there be ſome beginnings, yet apt to fall back; becauſe, not *planted in the courts of the Lord.* And hence, *Col.* 2. 5. *Joying, and beholding your order, and the ſtedfaſtneſſe of your faith in Chriſt*, order and ſtedfaſtneſſe are joyned together. 2. Of miſery, *Zach.* 14. 17. *And it ſhall be, that whoſoever will not come up of all the families of the Earth unto* Jeruſalem, *to worſhip the King, the Lord of Hoſts; even upon them ſhall be no rain.* 3. Sadneſſe, hence, *Iſa.* 56. 7. *Even them I will bring to my holy Mountain, and make them joyfull in my Houſe of Prayer.* To be joyfull in the houſe of Prayer, is promiſed to ſuch as joyn themſelves to Gods Covenant.

2. 2. They have a power given them of binding and looſing; By admonition of any one, that being received in, ſhall ſin againſt their communion, and the Lord in it; thereby to defile the whole body, and to provoke the wrath

wrath of the Lord againſt the ſame; and this is mentioned, *Matth.* 18. and by the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 5. 1, 4. and this is given to them, to uſe againſt whatever ſinner or offender it be; be he great or ſmall, Prince or Peer; if he be a brother, he is to lye down here: An admonition is an arreſt and meſſage from God, from Chriſt Jeſus the King of Kings; *Eglon* muſt come down from his throne, when this is brought.

Now I grant again, this power may be abuſed miſerably; as to admoniſh without conviction, or without compaſſion and love, but in heat and paſſion, &c. Yet this is part of Chriſts binding power in his Church; which when 'tis done, 'tis bound in heaven.

Now when men come to that paſſe, that they do not only ſin (for that the Lord pardons) but are grown to that height, that they caſt off all reproofs, and Chriſt-like admonitions for ſin: ſteept it may be in many tears and prayers before they came, and ſweetned with the Spirit of mercy and terror of Chriſt Jeſus in the mouths of his ſervants, this brings under bondage. 'Tis not ſin ſo much, for this will be; but when they cannot abide reproofs, they are iron morſels, cannot be digeſted; and hence, ſometime hide it, and twenty ſhifts, and half as many lies; or if it be found out, defend it, and fall a fencing and thruſting, and try it out to the laſt, or extenuate it twenty wayes, that a beam is a mote; and which is worſe, their hearts riſe and ſwell, and they bear a privy grudge againſt them, as if they were their enemies, becauſe they tell them the truth; when they ſhould ſay; *Let the righteous ſmite me. Exod.* 2. 14. *Who made thee a Prince and Judge over us?* When *Moſes*, the *Iſraelites* deliverer was raiſed up, he thereupon departs, and they lye under heavy bondage, when they caſt off his reproof. It's true, a Saint may not for a time ſubmit; but yet it argues a height of ſpirit for the preſent, unfit for communion with God, and the Lord will bring them off, and humble them for their pride. 2 *Sam.* 23. 6, 7. *But the ſons of* Belial *ſhall be all of them as thorns thruſt away; becauſe they cannot be taken with hands.*

A childe of God may have many weakneſſes, a hypocrite many excellencies; but the tryall of them is, when they come to be arreſted with a ſad reproof, how they yield there, and that as unto God; eſpecially when confeſſion ſhall either diſcredit their perſon, or make others

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queſtion their grace. Snakes will not hiſſe nor ſting, till touched; a ſheep will be led to the ſlaughter, and turn the cheek to him that ſmites: So ſhould one poor brother do to another, when he comes to him in the name of the Lord; but not many that will ſo do, but reſiſt and oppoſe againſt all reaſon.

3. 3. They have a power of Communication of good one to another, in way of edification, according to their places in this their communion: So that now, 'tis not only left in the hands of the Officers, but of the whole Church, and each Member in the Church; according to his place and ability, to edifie the whole, *Eph.* 4. 16. *From whom the whole body, fitly joyned and compacted together, by that which every joynt ſupplyeth, according to the effectuall working in the meaſure of every part, making increaſe of the body, unto the edifying it ſelf in love.*

Members are not to ſtand like beautifull pictures in Church-windows, and as coſtly Images in Churches; that have eyes, and ſee not, eares, and hear not; but they are to be living ſtones in Gods building; not only to build up themſelves, but one another alſo, that ſo a man may not only get no hurt from communion of Churches, but he may get good indeed from the ſame. And if I miſtake not, here is the wound of Churches: When Members ſeek not, and indeavour not the good one of another; and ſo have Ordinances and means of doing one another good, but exerciſe them not; or if they do, receive not the good they might hereby; but may ſay, and ſhall ſay at laſt as he, *Prov.* 5. 14. *I was almoſt in all evill in the midſt of the Congregation:* Sin prevailing, and ſorrows by little and little, like water in a leaking ſhip, ſinking the poor bark.

Queſt. *Queſt.* What are thoſe means that are left to the Saints themſelves, even private Members to exerciſe in Chriſtian communion for men and women; and ſo you may ſee when theſe are neglected, or not improved, the power of Chriſt in his Church is caſt off ſo far forth?

Anſw. *Anſw.* 1. The firſt is, a Spirit of dear Chriſt-like love one to another, every one to all, and all to that again; being ready to expreſſe it ſelf, in procuring the good of others as well as its own: This doth ſweeten communion very much, and edifies, quickens, and encourageth a Chriſtian in his whole courſe marvelouſly. *Eph.* 4. 16. *Making increaſe of the body, unto the edifying it ſelf in love.*

Love

Love edifieth, 1 *Cor.* 8. 1. *Knowledge puffeth up, but Charity edifieth.* It's the joy of the Saints, and that which makes the Saints to bleſſe God in heaven; where, take any one ſingly, all joyntly beſides honour it, tender it, and ſeek the good of it; and that one bleſſeth God, and ſeeks their good more than its own again; and this is prophefied, *Zeph.* 3. 9. *That they may call upon the name of the Lord, to ſerve him with one conſent, to ſerve the Lord with one ſhoulder*; to help one another ſpiritually and outwardly, where there be many griefs and burdens which depreſſe the ſpirits, and make it unſerviceable, is removed: As, what is there that doth alienate the hearts of men more from God and his Church, but want of love? Now when mens love grows cold, that a godly man is not eſteemed whiles he lives, nor his death lamented ſo much as the loſſe of a ſwine. When people grow ſtrange one to another, and take diſtaſtes and prejudices; when they can ſit by the fire-ſide, and cenſure, and whiſper; and make offences, and take offences; and minds divide, and hearts divide; that if you ask what ſuch a one is good for? the anſwer is; he is good for himſelf, and good to breed brawles, and divide a Church; *A Kingdome divided againſt it ſelf, cannot ſtand*; & therſore hereby you caſt off this Kingdom. Oh, Chriſtians ſhould pray for this, and mourn for want of this; and ſtudy peace, & follow it: It ſhould be death to differ, or ſide, or make a party, one againſt another.

2. Earneſt prayer for the Church, & all in it beſides thy ſelf: and that with ſtriving with God, till an anſwer is given: *Stretcht-out prayers*, as they made for *Peer.* James 5. 16. *Confeſs your faults one to another, and pray one for ather, that you may be healed.* And ſo *Jude* 20. *But ye beloved, building up your ſelves in your moſt holy faith, praying in the holy Ghoſt.* This is a meanes to edifie one another, when there is inlargedneſſe of heart to pray one for another; *Pſalme* 122. 8. *For my brethrens ſake, I'le wiſh thy peace.* Sometimes a Chriſtian can do others little good; yet he will wraſtle for him in his prayers to God: One knowes not the good comes hereby; if withall a man keeps a good Conſcience, making conſcience of his wayes. And 'tis one of the greateſt priviledges that a man hath, when once he hath a ſhare in all the prayers of the Saints as his own; and

2: *Acts* 5. 12.

it answers that *Quere*, What is a Christian the better for the liberties of the Church? *Matth.* 18. 19. *Again, I say unto you; that if two of you shall agree on earth, as touching any thing they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.* v. 20. *For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there I am in the midst of them.*

Now when people are false herein to their brethren, and to their Covenant; to their God, and to their own soules; (for there is no one prayer thou makest that shall be lost; but if it attain not a blessing for others, it shall return again into thy bosome.) When there shall be no heart to spend prayer, or shed tears for them, whom Christ hath shed his blood for; now, you cast off the Kingdome of Christ.

Oh Brethren, consider of it, when there shall be many a soul in a Church taken by Satans temptations, and held in temptations, and ready to be overcome by temptations; and it may bee, would not be so, but because thou dost not pray; publick Ordinances, the ministery of the word, little good done thereby; because thou hast no heart to pray. *Acts* 4. 31. *And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were met together; and they were all filled with the holy Ghost.* This is the reason, the hearts of thy children, servants, and fellow-brethren remain secure and unshaken by all the Sermons they hear; nothing doth them good, nothing will pierce or penetrate their adamant-like hearts; because, thou hast no heart to pray for them, or at least, not to purpose.

3. 3. Timely Exhortation; when brethren are dead-hearted, and heartlesse in their Christian course. *Heb.* 3. 12, 13. *Take heed brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; but exhort one another whiles it is called to day, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulnesse of sin.* Brotherly exhortation is a remedy against Apostasie of heart; for though a man cannot convince another, yet he may exhort him; and 'tis to be done in season, whiles it's called to day, with due respect, and taking notice of what good there is, with much wisdome, and a spirit of humility; or else thou spoilest all thou medlest withall; putting your selves in their estate, and with hearty unfeigned prayer, that the Lord would accompany the same with his blessing. *Heb.* 10. 24. *Consider one another, to provoke unto love and good works.* Look over the Congregation, and consider such

ſuch a Brothers or Siſters eſtate; one is poor and low, another falling, another very much altered: Now in ſome caſes, a private Brother may do more than a Miniſter; the Lord help us, and ſtir us up to this work: Now when this is neglected, many ſoules are hardned.

4. Inſtructing and teaching one another, as occaſion ſerves; *Rom.* 15. 14. *And I my ſelf alſo am perſwaded of you my bretbren, that you alſo are full of goodneſſe, filled with all knowledge, able to admoniſh one another.* They were able for to inſtruct and teach one another. *Iſa.* 54. 13. *They ſhall be all taught of God.* What God teacheth thee, that do thou teach others; what thou gaineſt by hearing, or by praying, or meditation: by putting queſtions to others, ſometimes to teach, and ſometimes to be taught; and this do, if poſſible, in all occaſionall meetings, and worldly diſcourſes; mix with it ſome ſweet truth that God hath taught thee. But now on the other ſide, when Chriſtians ſhall meet, and a man is the worſe for their fruitleſſe diſcourſe, no ſavour of any thing of God; Let them meet never ſo long or often, walking or ſitting, this is ſad. 4.

5. In Comforting thoſe that be ſad; *Theſ.* 5. 14. and 4. *ult. Comfort the feeble-minded, and ſupport the weak; wherefore, comfort one another with theſe words.* There are many ſad hearts in Gods Church, and ſad things are as wounds to a mans limbs, that make him halt or fall. Oh brethren, be much in this work, 2 *Cor.* 1. 4. *Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we our ſelves are comforted of God.* That a ſoul may ſay, ſuch a one came to me, and ſpake ſome few words to me; but they were as ſeaſonable, as though the Lord had ſent an Angel from heaven to ſpeak to me, and of more worth, than if he had given me many pounds: But now, when this alſo is neglected, that one Chriſtian hath not a word of encouragement to another, but dry and ſavourleſs diſcourſe; this the Lord takes very ill at the hands of his people, that have received comfort from himſelf in the day of their ſorrow and diſtreſſe. 5.

6. Reſtoring a Brother fallen with a ſpirit of meekneſs; *Gal.* 6. 1, 2. *Brethren, if any be overtaken with a fault, ye which are ſpirituall, reſtore ſuch a one with a ſpirit of meekneſſe.* Oh, how will a poor ſoul bleſſe the Lord for ſuch a Brothers prayers, admonitions, and exhortations, when 6.

the Lord shall have brought his heart back again to himself; although before he did most of all disesteem and vilifie him.

Now, when these are not used, or not with a spirit of meekness improved, that a man never blesseth God for these; the Lord Jesus is pulled down from his throne, when not done according to the ability, time and place that the Lord affords. And this I wish, the Churches mourn not for another day: For my own part, I do adjudge my self before God and men, as most guilty of this, that I enjoy many sweet Ordinances, and we improve them not; and hence, the glory of the Lord fils not his Tabernacle, abides not on his Churches, either to draw others to them, or to make others abundantly blesse God for them.

Now here I will shew you the causes of this.

1: 1. *Not gaining much in private duties*, in Prayer, Meditation, Reading, and daily Examination of a mans own heart: And hence they cannot do good, because they receive none, or very little themselves; they have not a treasure within, hence they can spend little, have no heart or ability to exhort, instruct, comfort: He that keeps not his shop, his shop will never keep him. As *Psal* 41. 6. *His heart gathereth iniquity to it self, when he goeth abroad, he telleth it.*

2. 2. *A low spirit*, which makes a man to have low thoughts, and endeavours, I mean not an humble, but a narrow spirit, not inlarged to hold much, or to do much, hence it doth little. As take a plain Countrey-man, he neither seeks or regards the affaires of the State in publick, because his spirit and condition is low; but Princes do mind and attend to the affaires of the Kingdome, to advance it; because their condition is high, and they know it. Moses, *he suffered reproach with the people of God*, losse of all the honour and pleasure of *Pharaohs* Court; feared not *Pharaoh*, nor losse of life for their sakes: For, *he saw that God which is invisible*; like *Saul*, when once a Ringdome comes to be in his eye, he leaves off to seek the Asses.

3. 3. *Sloth*. There are *Thornes*, Prov. 15. 19. *and Lions*, Prov. 26. 13. *in a sluggards way*: There be many difficulties, businesses, occasions, and objections; when as if once he were resolved to break thorough them, then the work would go on: Like a man, when he is in his warm

warm bed, he is loth to riſe ; but when he is up, he would not be in his bed again, if he might be hired again to put off his clothes : I ſhall get no good, ſaith one, nor do none, ſaith another ; and when theſe buſineſſes are paſt, and occaſions over ; and at another time, I will ſeek God, and go about Gods work ; and thus a ſlothfull ſpirit hinders.

4. *Want of Faith.* 2 Cor. 4. 13. *We believe, and hence we ſpeak.* Faith empties us moſt, and hence fils us with Spirit and Life of Chriſt Jeſus ; hence *Steven, full of faith, and the holy Ghoſt.* A lively Chriſtian, when he comes in another Chriſtians company, it may be he knows not what to ſpeak ; but he looks up to Chriſt, and ſayes ; Now Lord, here is an opportunity in doing or receiving ſome good ; and therefore now Lord help. 4.

5. *Want of fear of God,* and conſolation of the ſpirit of God, from the ſenſe of Gods love. *Acts* 9. 31. *They walked in the fear of the Lord, and conſolations of the Holy Ghoſt :* the Church was edified by the conſolations of the Holy Ghoſt. A man that's wounded, keeps within, and ſtirs not ; but when he is in health and ſtrength, now hard work is his meat, he cannot live except he work. 1 *Cor.* 15. *ult.* 5.

6. *Not conſidering the ſhortneſſe of our time of ſowing.* Heb. 10. 25. Whereas, if men were on their death-bed, they would wiſh, Oh, that I had walked more blameleſly, and fruitfully ; men care not for a comfortable reckoning as yet. 6.

There are two cauſes why they receive no good.

1. *From a mean eſteem of the Saints* ; looking on them as men, and not as an Ordinance of Chriſt ; their perſons, prayers, and ſpeeches. And this is a rule ; Men never gain any good by that Ordinance which they deſpiſe : if all were Scholars, Miniſters, or Saints glorified, they could then eſteem them. Hence, *Eph* 4. 16. Edifying is by love ; *Making increaſe of the body, edifying it ſelf in love.* 1.

2. *From want of being poor in ſpirit,* and ſenſible of their extream need of Chriſt, continually in all means : Beggers will pick up crums, and watch for a word of encouragement. *Iſa.* 11. 6. *A little childe ſhall lead the Wolf and the Lion* ; that is, when the Lord hath humbled the heart of a man. Oh, when a Chriſtian 2.

thinks none ſo poor and ſhallow, and heartleſſe as I, and every one is better than I, however I need more than any: This ſoul will be glad to ſuck the breſt; and the Lord will fill others with light and life, and his own bowels, to do ſuch a one good. Whereas, elſe they are ſhut up, and they find no good conveyed to them by any of the Ordinances of the Lord, nor any preſence of God in them.

3. 3. There is a Miniſteriall power, committed from Chriſt by the Church to the ruling Officers thereof. I ſay, by the Church, for all power in the Church, is properly Chriſts, yet he nextly communicates it ordinarily to his Church, or multitude of Beleevers, to whom is committed the ſupreme power of the Keyes in his word, and a binding and looſing, as hath been ſhewen; and by this Church, this power hath been by Chriſts appointment, and ſtill is, to be communicated to thoſe that are choſen out of themſelves, to be Officers and Rulers over them in the Lord, to exerciſe the power of Chriſt over them according to his will. Hence the very power of binding and looſing, opening and ſhutting, given to the Church, is alſo given to *Peter* and the reſt of the Apoſtles, and the ſucceſſors of Chriſts Apoſtles in Doctrine, ſent of Chriſt, *John* 20. 23. *Whoſoevers ſins ye remit, they are remitted; &c.* Becauſe, though the power of Communication of it is in the Churches hand, yet the power of uſuall adminiſtration of it is in their hand; whiles they exerciſe it according to Chriſt, yet by the Church. And hence *Paul* puts a difference between this extraordinary Miniſtery, as Apoſtleſhip, and ordinary. *Gal.* 1. 1. *An Apoſtle not of men, not by the will of men, but by Chriſt*; for the Church, not by it: Now this I ſay, is by the Church from Chriſt. Hence, *Acts* 20. 28. *The holy Ghoſt hath made them overſeers*; ſo that 'tis no invention of man, or act of man, or the power of man; but of Chriſt, and hence refuſe to be under this power; men caſt off the yoke and power of Chriſt Jeſus.

For though the eſtate of the Church be *Democraticall* and *Popular*; and hence no publick adminiſtrations or Ordinances are to be adminiſtrated publickly, without notice and conſent of the Church; Yet the government of it under Chriſt, the Mediator and Monarch of his Church; tis *Ariſtocraticall*, and by ſome chief, gifted by Chriſt, choſen by the people to rule them in the name of Chriſt,

Chriſt, who are unable, and unfit to be all Rulers themſelves; and to caſt off theſe, or not to be ruled by theſe; is to caſt off Chriſt. *Luke* 10. 16. *He that rejecteth you, rejecteth me. Numb.* 16. 3. *You are gathered together againſt the Lord*; The Lord accounts himſelf oppoſed and reſiſted, when the Officers of his Church are ſlighted, and their government deſpiſed.

Queſt. What is this power? *Queſt:*

Anſw. 1. *Negatively:* 1. It is not any Lordly pompous power, to bear the bell of great ſmoakie titles, to govern in worldly pomp; or by worldly rewards, and civill puniſhments. 2 *Cor.* 10. 4. *The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God, to the pulling down of ſtrong holds. It ſhall not be ſo with you*, ſaith Chriſt; but as I have been without all worldly ſtate, ſo muſt you be one to another. And hence, 1 *Peter* 5. 4. *Not being Lords over Gods heritage:* Chriſt never gave his Miniſters power of opening and ſhutting the doors of New-gate, and *Bonners* Cole-houſe if they would not ſubſcribe, or to confute mens opinions with their own lawes, and bind conſciences with chaines of Iron, or to promote his ſervants by ſpirituall livings. Chriſt himſelf refuſed to be a Judge in civill cauſes; hence ſome of our Divines, when they would grant that *Peter* was *Chriſts* ſucceſſor, and the Biſhop of *Rome Peters* and *Chriſts* Vicar; yet as Chriſt being on earth, exerciſed no civill power, ſo much leſs may theſe. *Anſw.* 1.

2. 'Tis not any Antichriſtian illimated power, *viz.* to have power over many Churches (for thats the main ſpiritual Antichriſtian externall power) and the Miniſters thereof; for we read in Scripture of many Elders and Biſhops in the ſame Church, *Acts* 20. 28. but never of any one ordinary Miniſter, or Officer over many Churches; either to govern, or to baptize, as the *Anabaptiſts* would among them, as many godly plead for now in the miſty confuſion of *England*. And look as we cry out of one Miniſter non-reſident, that ſhall have ſix or ten livings, though he give never ſo good a ſtipend; not only becauſe of his pride and covetouſneſſe, but becauſe of his unconſcionableneſſe, &c. So here much more of one man Overſeer over many congregations, it may be an hundred at leaſt 2.

3. 'Tis not any Magiſterial power, *Diotrephes*-like; either to do what they will, *Mat.* 23. 8. and their wills to be their laws, No, *Matth.* 28. 20, *Teach, all that I com-* 3.

mand you: If they do ſin, their perſons are under the cenſure of the Church, in caſe of manifeſt offence and ſcandall by the mouthes of two or three witneſſes who being Members of the whole Church, and under it, and being ſinfull Members; may, if the caſe need it, be proceeded againſt by the whole. Neither have they any power to act any publick Ordinance which concerns the whole Church, and where 'tis bound by Chriſt to judge, without the privity and conſent of the Church, as to elect Officers, admit Members, caſt out offenders in the Veſtry without the knowledge of the Church, one of the blaines of the reformed Churches, which the Apoſtles with their extraordinary power never did themſelves, much leſſe ſhould theſe. 1 *Cor.* 5.

4. 4. They have no immediate power of rule immediately given by Chriſt, over any one particular Church, but mediate by that Church where they are; their gifts of teaching and ruling are immediately from Chriſt; but their actuall power to exerciſe it over this or that particular Congregation, is by that Church only. Hence Deacons that were only to take care for the outward eſtate of the Church, *Act* 6. 3, 4. they were ordained by lifting up their hands. This is Apoſtolicall power, and an intruſion, and cuts aſunder the force of the argument of Maſter *Ball* his Book of power for Presbytery, &c.

2. 2. What is their power affirmatively?

Anſw. 1. They have a power given them of ruling and governing from Chriſt by the people; hence they are called Rulers, and ſuch as rule, and are over Gods Church; hence they have ſtrict charge and command from the Lord to do it. Hence *Paul* at *Epheſus*, When he was with them three years, yet had Rulers there; and *verſ.* 28. *Feed Gods ſtock bought by bloud; over which*, not men, but *the holy Ghoſt hath made you Overſeers*; Chriſts Church being like ſheep, apt to ſtray and periſh, unleſſe theſe watch againſt wolves, and theſe the Apoſtle at his laſt parting left; hence alſo, they are to give an account of it at the laſt day. *Heb.* 13. Hence theſe caſt off the Lords government over them, who will have no Rulers or Governours in Churches, who ſhall either ſpeak it or think it, but leave all to themſelves and their liberty; to teach, baptize, to order things in Church, and ſo by this means

means they are not only ſingle Members or Officers; but Paſtor, and Teacher, and Elder and all. This generation of men, ſons of *Korah*, are riſen up in theſe latter times; eſpecially amongſt Anabaptiſts, Familiſts, and rigid Separatiſts, and who are privily crept into *New-England* Churches; Whoſe condemnation ſleeps not, Satan carrying them to extreams, and pride lifting them up above themſelves, above Men, above Officers, above Ordinances, and above God. That look as Common-wealths are under greateſt bondage, where there is an Anarchy, where every one muſt be a ſlave, becauſe every one muſt be a Maſter; So in the Churches, no greater bondage can come than this, the foundation of all confuſion, and the ſcandall of the wayes of God which through mercy his people here enjoy.

2. This power is more than any one private Member hath in the Church, who is not an Officer; It would be a moſt ſimple ridiculous thing, if there ſhould be Election, Ordination, many Prayers, much triall of men, for to rule, and guide, and govern, ſeparation from the reſt, and yet not to have any more power than one private Member. Hence the Apoſtle ſayes, *Submit to them that are over you*, 1 Theſſalonians 5. 12. and Hebrews 13. 17. *Obey them that guide you, or rule over you.* Hence thoſe that do acknowledge Governours in the Church for names ſake, but they are ſuch as have no more power than a private Brother; they do but allow the name, but deny the thing: Hence ſay they, they are to watch; ſo are private Members: they are to admoniſh; ſo is every private Member: they are to rule; the word ſignifies to guide and go before another. 2.

Anſw. 1. The word to rule, 1 *Theſ.* 5. 12. is the ſame word with 1 *Tim.* 3. 4, 5. He that rules his own houſe, which is a little more than they that are beſides him in the Family; though this be not ſuch a paternall power, yet it is ſomewhat more than that of private Members. And that *Heb.* 13. 17. is a word which is the ſame with that in *Matth.* 2. 6. Governour, particularly ſpoken of Chriſts government, to feed otherwiſe than private Members. *Anſw.* 1.

Anſw. 2. 'Tis true, they are to watch and admoniſh in way of Chriſtian duty; but others in way of *Anſw.* 2.

Chriſts

Christs authority, as being his Ambassadors, and sent of him; as in a family, one servant should watch over another; but the chief Steward, he is to do it with authority in the absence of his Lord. And hence doth it with more majesty and power, and it takes, or should take deeper impression; so it is in Elders of a Church.

Hence also, when men shall cry for liberty to speak, an Elder forbids it; What, may not the Church have liberty? true, but you are not a Church. An Elder reproves, and they will reprove again; What, shall not the Church have liberty? An Elder gives reasons strong, and unanswerable for some thing to be done; a young fellow shall step up, and say, without ground, or shew of it, that's your light, and mine is otherwise: What, may not the Church have liberty? Yes, but you are not the Church; this is very sad, and hath been a root of greatest scandall that ever Gods wayes had. If Elders sin openly, 'tis another case, and somewhat also is there to be done; *Submit your selves one to another*, much more to an Elder, &c.

3. 3: In the execution of their office according to Christ, they are over the whole Church. Their persons indeed ase under them, in case they sin, and sin in the execution of their office, they are to be subject, not only to the whole, but to the last Member of the Church: Suppose the sin be not only suspected, or reported, or apprehended by one, but two or three witnesses at least, as 1 *Tim.* 5. 19. but whiles they execute it according to Christ, they are therein above the Church, and 'tis bound to be subject therein; and not to be subject, is to refuse to be under Christs government. Hence, *Heb.* 13. *Obey them that rule you*; he speaks to the whole Church, which was not in evill, but in good things according to God; and yet in evill things, look on them as those over them. *Exempli gratiâ*, A Minister in the execution of his office, let him preach Christs eternall truth, deliver it and prove it; What ever humane weaknesses there be in him, what ever darknesse there is in others, yet he is therein above Churches, Kings or Angels; and they shall answer it at the great day, that do not submit. In regard of my person said *Luther*, I'le fall down before any, but in regard of the truth I administer, I look on the Kings of the earth as nits, nay dust, &c. *ad Regem Angl.*

So in the power of the Keys in opening and shutting out Members;

Members; they have tried and proved ſuch a one; if they ſin, as they may, then give them reaſons; but if not, they are bound to ſubmit. And that not as unto other Chriſtians, but as unto an Ordinance, ſtampt with an authority of God upon them; indeed they are not to do any ſuch thing without the preſence, conſent, and judiciary power of the Church; and the Church may not ſubmit to what Elders propoſe to be Chriſts mind; but then they caſt off the Lords power, which they are to anſwer for another day. 1 *Cor.* 12. 28. they are called Governours. Now as a Ruler of a Ship is to order it, though a King be in it, over him in that reſpect, and the King is to be guided by him, whiles he guides it right; but if not, the King hath power over him, to command others to take the place, or caſt him over board.

'Tis true, they are but ſervants to the Church, becauſe they are by the Church, for the Church, and to help the Church, 2 *Cor.* 1. 24. and are ſubject to them if they ſin; but yet they are ſervants unto Chriſt, and in exerciſing his power according to him, above the Church. 2 *Cor.* 4, 5. *We preach Chriſt, and our ſelves your ſervants for Chriſt*; yet therein above them: Hence being their ſervants; if they ſin, they are under the cenſure of the Church, and the Church may caſt them by. So being Chriſts ſervants; if not ſubmitted to, the Lord doth account himſelf caſt off.

1. Becauſe their power thus rightly executed, is the power of Chriſt Jeſus: Hence refuſe it, you refuſe to be ſubject to him; If men wil not be ruled by Gods Ordinances, but will rule Ordinances, they go about to rule Chriſt. 1.

2. Becauſe, if there ſhall be no ſubjection here, 'tis profeſt licentiouſneſſe, and not liberty in Churches; You have liberty, but what liberty? to be ſubject to Chriſts power in pure liberty, and that in his ſervants. Now when men will not, and ſhall refuſe, without ſhewing reaſon, or convicting Elders of ſin; this is to caſt off the Government of Chriſt. 2.

3. Elders are helpers of people, and there is no people but will ſtand in need of ſuch helps, if humble, and able to diſcern, to attend the publick good, to teach and convince, &c. Hence, when there is no ſin appearing in the execution of their office, they ſhould with a holy fear ſubmit; and ſay, if ye be faithfull watchmen, what am I that I ſhould be unſatisfied? my ignorance may miſlead others, &c. 3.

4. They

4. 4. They have power to over-ſee, when they ſee cauſe, *Acts* 20. 28. and to ſee into, and enquire into the eſtate of the flock of God, to know their ſpirituall condition, ſo far as is fit to be known, that ſo they may be comforted in the work of Chriſt; though there be no ſin break out, nor they come to them. 1 *Theſ.* 3. 5, 6. The Apoſtle enquired into their faith, charity, and prayer, *verſ.* 7. and hence was comforted, &c. And this *Paul* doth not as an extraordinary man, but leaves his example as a preſident to the Elders of *Epheſus*; to go from houſe to houſe, and enquire, to teach and exhort, *Acts* 20. for Elders are to prevent ſcandals as well as to remove them, leſt when they come they ſay, Oh that I had known this before, eſpecially where they ſee need. Now hence it is that men caſt off the government of Chriſt, when they will not have their ſpirituall condition ſearched into, the Elders foot is now too great for his ſhoe, I am to give an account to God; ſo are they alſo of thee; now thou canſt not give it if thou enquireſt not how thy condition ſtands, neither can they with comfort unleſſe thou telleſt them how it ſtands with thee. 'Tis true there are many ſecret things they can never find out, yet they are to attend their duty.

The Miniſters charge is to caſt the ſeed, the Elders duty is to enquire after the fruit in the husbandry of Chriſt; it is a ſad condition when a man hath ſuch a wound that he will not go to the Lord for help, becauſe hee loves it; and will not have man to know it, becauſe hee is aſhamed of it; But you ſhall know it, at the laſt day that the Lord would have healed you, and you would not, but can quarrell and ſnap at the Elders when they come to enquire of your condition? and why do ye inquire; you take too much on you.

5. 5. They have power to guide, and counſell, and warn the Church, at leaſt in all weighty affaires which may concern them and their common good: hence they are called *guides* and *leaders* to the people, *Heb.* 13. 17. *Mal.* 2. 7. I do not mean in all perſonall things. *Acts* 20. 31. I warned you of wolves, &c. Hence

1. 1. For members in matters of great and weighty affaires which concern the good of the whole Church,

nay

may all Churches, never to *enquire at Abel* is caſting off the Lord, as in election of Offices in Church, and Magiſtrates in the Common-wealth, &c.

2. Hence to receive any opinion different from all the Elders in the Church, and never to much as ſpeak, much leſſe come to a ſad debate about it, is to caſt off this yoke, and contrary to covenant, and Elders would never have undertook the care of the Church without it; and it ſads their hearts that they do their work feebly. 2.

3. Hence to propoſe a doubtfull queſtion to the Church, which may trouble, or bring an offenders ſin to the Church without counſell of the Elders, who may encourage them if of God, and ripen it for the Church, or diſcourage it if not of God. Chriſt when he writes to the Churches, he ſuperſcribes his Epiſtles to the Angels; and if one man may propoſe a doubtfull opinion, another may, and a third, and one may ſide with another, and ſo much confuſion will follow. 3.

4. Hence when men ſhall not take warning of evils to come upon evident grounds, it's caſling off the Lords yoke; and when they come on thee, thou mayeſt ſay it is becauſe I have refuſed to hearken to my watchers, they warned me of this, and it may be you will find elſe ſuch evils which the Scripture notes, *according to the word of the Lord by his ſervant* Eliſha, ſo will the Lord make good the words and threatnings of his faithfull ſervants. 4.

5. They have power of publick reproof of any member of the Church, in caſe of plain, open and publick offences; others without leave cannot, nor ought not, although others may tell them. Reproofs are part of the power peculiar to the governours in any ſociety, where governours are preſent eſpecially, and at hand; as now in a Family, no wiſe man will ſuffer brawles amongſt his children or ſervants, but ſayes he, tell me. 1 *Tim.* 5. 20. Now this is ſad when a man cannot forbear reproof of others, nor hear reproofs of Elders, but turns again, and will be judge in his own cauſe though never ſo groſſe, a ſign of an extream froward high ſpirit, *Hoſea* 4. 4. which makes the Lord to take away Elders as ſoon as any ſin is committed, and ſtop their mouths. *Exod.* 2. *Who made thee* 5.

a Judge, &c. And when afflictions come, and you then enquire, what is the cause of it? you may be sure this is one, even by the confession of the blindest deboist ones. *Prov.* 5. 12. *How have I hated Instruction, and not obeyed the voice of my teachers?*

6. 6. They are to feed with power, as the word ποιμαίνειν signifieth, every one in their places, publickly instructing, exhorting, comforting, and privately also; which though private men may do, yet here is the stamp of authority also, and so the more power the more blessing usually, if God be acknowledged therein. *Acts* 20. 28. Hence,

1. 1. When men despise their food; they are poor things they speak, and they can see no matter in them; and that after study, prayers and tears, &c. and so cast it by; this is to cast off the Lord.

2. 2. When men grow glutted and full, *Mal.* 1. *ult.* although they eat not a bit, and hence thrive not, but a spirit of slumber and a deep sleep grows on them, that they cannot be awakened by all the Ordinances of God, These things call for chains. *Amos* 8. 12. *When will these Sabbaths be ended?* for which the Lord threatens a famin, and then you shall know the worth of them in the want of them.

These things I speak. 1. Because I see the Apostle in many of his Epistles layes this charge on the people. *Heb.* 13. 7, 17. 'tis twice repeated. 1. Lest Officers be sadded in their work that 's heavy. 2. Lest it be unprofitable for you; you think to get this and that good by it, but it will be nothing in the conclusion.

2. 2. Because we lie under slander of many, and that godly, as if Elders in Churches were but only Ciphers.

3. 3. Because people begin to run to extreames, Elders taking all to themselves, and people taking all for themselves.

4. 4. Because if here be not attendance you quickly see the miserable ruine and fall of Churches, more sad than the burning of *Solomons* Temple. 'Tis observed of *Jeroboam*, when he was sacrificing he had no leprosie, but when he stretched out his hand against the Prophet it was withered; for the Lord will not bear here, they may be depised, and you may think *your selves Kings without them*, 1 *Cor.* 4. 8. and they will say so, they may rule as they

they will, but you will do as you liſt. But the Lord will be provoked for this, all Satans ſubtilty lies here; diſgrace the Elder ſayes one, divide them ſayes another, pull them down ſayes the third, that there may be no King in *Iſrael*, no nor in *Sion*, that we may do what is right in our own eyes.

3. Try when the externall Kingdome of Chriſt in a Common-wealth is caſt off; for when any Common-wealth is ordered according to the ſacred will of Chriſt, by ſuch perſons eſpecially whoſe aim is to advance the Kingdome of Chriſt by their rule and power, 'tis then become the Kingdome of Chriſt Jeſus. And hence, *Revel.* 11. 15. when the ſeventh trumpet is blown, and the Lords laſt wo is come upon the world and the Kingdoms thereof, which have oppoſed Chriſt, and thoſe Kingdomes are turned to imbrace the Goſpell, and ſubmit to the power of Chriſt in the ſame, then it's ſaid, *The Kingdomes of the world are become the Kingdomes of Chriſt*; it's not ſaid, Chriſts Kingdome is become the Kingdome of the word, as if Chriſt ſhould put down civill authority, and exerciſe rule by it himſelf, but, *The Kingdomes of the world, i. e.* the various Kingdomes *are become Chriſts, i. e.* to advance it, and debaſe themſelves at his feet. *Eph.* 1. 21. it's ſaid, *All things are put under Chriſts feet, and he is head over all things to the Church*, (that is univerſally, chiefly, nextly, particularly,) ſo then earths Kingdomes when they are ſubject to Chriſt, for his ends, now they exerciſe the Kingdome of Chriſt, in a manner; and hence to caſt off this, is to caſt off the Kingdome of Chriſt, and ſo to provoke the Lord to put us under bondage. 3:

Queſt. When is Chriſts Power and Kingdome caſt off here? *Queſt.*

Anſw. There is a double Power in the Kingdoms of the world, which I ſuppoſe, when they become Chriſts Kingdomes, they will retain. *Anſw.*

Firſt, There is ſome ſupreme or higher power; in the chief Magiſtrates, Ptinces, or chief Court of Juſtice. 1.

Secondly, There is ſome inferiour power, by ſome ſuperiour power, ſet over particular Perſons, Cities, and Towns, for the well ordering of them. The ground of this is, that naturall neceſſity which *Jethro* propounded from God to *Moſes*, *Exod.* 18. 17, 18. *'Tis not good for thee to be alone, but thou wilt both wear out thy ſelf, and thy people.* Publick authority muſt have many eyes, and 2.

many

many hands; and like a River that is to water a Countrey, it must have many streams: And hence they had in the Common-wealth of *Israel*, which was for God, in every City Judges, and in Towns, such as were over fifties and tens, *Exod.* 18. 25. which it seemes continued long, till all fit men for government were taken away; and then *Isaiah* 3. 3. their condition is lamented.

Now the form of this government is not in all Common-wealths alike; the Lord not binding to any; and hence called ἀνθρωπίνη κτίσις, an ordinance of men. Hence it is a fooliſh vanity to ask a warrant in Scripture for ſuch a form of Government; for humane wiſdome may teach this, though not in Church-government. Yet this ſupreme and inferiour Government hath been in all Kingdomes, 1 *Pet.* 2. 13, 14. to both which ſubjection is required; to refuſe to give it, is to caſt off the Lords Government; and there are couched four reaſons in that place to prove this.

1. 1. *Do it for the Lords ſake*, for the name of Chriſt; and that honour and majeſty of Chriſt ſtamped on them, ſubmit; hence caſt them off, you caſt by reſpect unto; nay, the name of Chriſt Jeſus.

2. 2. Becauſe they are in the room of the Lord, to do the work of the Lord; *In puniſhing evil doers, and for the praiſe of them that do well.* It's true, they may abuſe their power otherwiſe; but yet their power is one thing, and their abuſe of it another.

3. 3. Becauſe, *this is the will of Chriſt, and you do well in it; and ſo you ſhall ſtop the mouthes of fooliſhmen, apt to ſpeak againſt you for ſin.*

4. 4. Becauſe, *this is the liberty of Chriſt, verſ.* 6. and *you are ſervants to Chriſt* in it; and to do otherwiſe is *licentiouſneſſe*; and their liberty to exempt themſelves from the power of lawfull authority, was but *a cloak of it.* For ſo it ſeems in thoſe dayes, ſome held it part of their Chriſtian liberty to be free from all bonds; and ſaid, that Chriſt had made them Kings on Earth, &c. So that if they did caſt off ſubjection, they did caſt of the name of Chriſt, power of Chriſt, will of Chriſt, liberty of Chriſt Jeſus. Even under heathen Magiſtrates; what then do they that caſt it off under others?

Queſt. 2: *Queſt.* 2. When is Chriſts Government caſt off in reſpect of the ſupreme power?

Anſw. *Anſw.* Thoſe that know the queſtions about the power

power of Princes and people, eſpecially revived in theſe laſt dayes; cannot but know the field is large, where now I am, I ſhall be wholly ſilent; unleſſe I ſaw greater cauſe of ſpeaking than I do, and only point out two or three particulars to prevent ſuch ſins as ſtand next to the door; to break in upon this power.

1. When men caſt off ſecretly dread, and fear, and reverence of the Majeſty, Dominion and Sovereignty that God ſtamps upon authority; and ſo come to have low, mean thoughts of them, and contempt of them. It's true, none ſhould be elected, but ſuch as men can honour for ſome eminency or other, and that of God, ſeen in them. *Able men fearing God, chief amongſt the people*; was the counſell of God by *Jethro* and *Moſes*; but when they be Elected, now to deſpiſe them, and hence not to bow the knee, or ſtir the hat, and ſpeak rudely before them; it's caſting off, not only their power in ſight of God; but the very root of it, which is honour: And hence in the fifth Commandment, all duties to them are comprehended under the word *Honour*. And who ſees not but this is a ſin, which is apt to attend the ſpirits of men in a place of liberty, and in our weak beginnings, and *day of ſmall things*? Reports are abroad, that no men of worth are reſpected; and hence the Countrey is neglected. I cannot ſay ſo after many thoughts; for I am perſwaded no place in *Europe* more ready to honour men of publick ſpirits, and of eminency in piety, and humility; without the ſeeing of which, no Countrey more apt to viliſie; becauſe grace is the glory in the eye of a Countrey led by Religion: But take heed, leſt ſuch a ſpirit be all us; leſt the Lord put out our Lamps, *and caſt our Crown down to the ground.* 1.

2. When men ſeek to pluck the ſword of revenge for ſin hurting the Commonwealth, out of their hands; without which, the greateſt power in a Common-wealth, is but a pageant, and a meer vanity, almoſt a nullity. Hence, *Rom.* 13. 4. *He is Gods Miniſter*; yes; when he gives good counſell; and *when he is a revenger, to execute wrath on him that doth evill*: So that be the evill what it will be, if it hurt the Common-wealth, or be againſt any wholeſome Law thereof; he is Gods Miniſter to puniſh it civilly. In the firſt Reformation of *Geneva*, there were as many hereſies and errours almoſt as truths of God; *Servetus*, he denyed the Deity of Chriſt; where- 2.

upon the Magiſtrate put him to death, who dyed with extream horror; Whereupon hereſies being begun to be ſnibb'd and blaſted, *Bellius* writes a Book: 1. That men ſhould puniſh no hereſie at all; but be merciſull and meek, as Chriſt was to the adulterous woman. 2. If they did; yet that Magiſtrates they ſhould not puniſh for
3. errors or hereſies. 3. If they did, yet not with ſuch ſeverity as they begun. To all which, *Beza* hath given a moſt learned and ſolid anſwer, deteſting the hypocriſie of the man, and the ſad conſequences of ſuch opinions, if their power ſhould be diminiſhed.

I conceive, 'tis caſting off Chriſts power, to take away power from Magiſtrates to puniſh ſins againſt the firſt Table, of which errors and hereſies in Religion are part. It's as clear as the Sun, that the Kings of *Judah* that were godly did it, and were commended for it; and 'tis as clear, they were commended for it; not as types of Chriſt, but becauſe they did therein that which was right in Gods eyes, and according to the commandment of the Lord; Which judiciall commandments, concerning the puniſhing of Sabbath-breakers, falſe Prophets, Hereticks, &c. Gods fence to preſerve morall lawes; they are of morall equity, and ſo to be obſerved to this day of Chriſtian Magiſtrates, &c. To exempt Clergymen in matters of Religion from the power of the civill ſword, is flat Popery; by means of which Antichriſt hath riſen, and hath continued in his pomp and power ſo long together. The indulgence of Princes towards the Papal function in matters of Religion, hath undone Chriſtendome.

'Tis true, every error is not to be immediately committed, but when 'tis like a gangrene, of a ſpreading nature, then the Magiſtrate in due time muſt cut it off ſpeedily.

Obiect. Leave them to the Church.

Anſw. True, leave them 1. there. But 2. Sometimes the Church will not, ſometimes they are not of any Church. A Papiſt, an Arminian may come in and leaven and damne many a ſoul, for which they had better never been; If it were but one, and if he ſayes, I do it with a meek ſpirit, (their trick of late) and none muſt meddle, becauſe mercy muſt be ſhewen to theſe wolves: A wiſe ſhepherd had rather let a hunter come in and kill one of his ſheep, than let a Wolf or Fox eſcape, *Acts* 20. 29

and

and ſee his people perſecuted, than their ſoules worried.

Hereſie and Error hath this property; it ever dies by ſevere oppoſition, and truth ever riſeth the more; becauſe Chriſt is againſt the one, Hence it muſt fall; but for the other, hence it ſhall riſe by its fall: Hence, ſet your ſelves againſt this, 'tis to oppoſe the power of Chriſt Jeſus And hence in *Henry* the 8th time, the Abbies fell, and never could riſe to this day; but the ſix Articles againſt the Saints purſued with blood, made them increaſe the more.

3. When men will not ſubmit to the wholeſome Laws of Magiſtrates; which are either fundamentall, and continuing; or Orders that have their date and time of expiring, made for common good. When men will either have no laws, or as good as none, or ſubmit to none but what they pleaſe, *Deut.* 17. 12. *He that will not hearken, but do preſumptuouſly, ſhall dye*; He being the Miniſter of the Lord; and indeed it is to caſt off the Lord. I go not about here to eſtabliſh a ſovereign power in *Magiſtrates*, which is proper to God, to make what lawes they will, about civill, Religious, or indifferent things, and then people to ſubmit to them for no other reaſon, but becauſe of their will; under which notion, ſuperſtition in Churches hath been uſhered and maintained, you muſt obey authority: in that caſe, it's better to ſuffer than to ſin, and not to do, than do. But I ſuppoſe the lawes juſt, righteous, holy, and for publick good, and that apparently ſo, and not in ſaying ſo only: Now here, to caſt off lawes, is to caſt off Chriſt. 3.

There are two things eſpecially, which are the cauſe and occaſion of the breach of all other lawes; and the ſtrongeſt ſins and ſweeteſt, which men, young men eſpecially, the hopes of the Common wealth, are catcht with, *Prov.* 2. 13, 16.

1. Whoredome, ſecret luſts and wantonneſſe, and other ſtrange luſts which I ceaſe and dare not name, 1 *Kings* 14. 24. The ſin before *Shiſhak* came, a ſin which many times *Solomon* cannot ſee thorow his window, nor the eye of authority diſcern; but *God will judge for it*, *Heb.* 13 5. and if he be Judge, who ſhall be thy Jailor, but Satan? and what ſhall be thy ſentence, but death? and what thy chaines, but a hard heart for the preſent, and horrour afterward? A ſin which poſſutes the very

earth, the land, the very dust of the ground; and the cause of all sin almost in a place, as drunkennesse, idlenes, corrupt opinions, scoffing at the Ministers of God, and wayes of God: For I seldom knew a persecutor, but he was an adulterer, though it's not alwayes true; and in the end, poverty and ruine. And know it, though no mans eye has seen thee, no power of Magistrate can reach thee; this word shall be fire to consume thee, unlesse thou repent: for thy looks, thy lusts, thy dalliances, thy thoughts, thy speeches, thy endeavours this way, much more for the thing. Mans law shall not bind you here, because it cannot reach you; but know, that Christ is cast off by you.

2. 2. Loose company, vain men, *Prov.* 25. 3, 4. A Commonwealth is a refined vessell of use for God, and judgement is established; when these are taken away, your knors of loose company. Take a poor Souldier alone, he is as other men, but when they are got into a knot together; now they grow strong against all Laws of God or men. So here, the knot of good fellowship hath been the bane of the flourishing State of *England*, meeting in Tavernes and such places; and the cause of whoredome, and of all evill commonly in a Nation. For hence, 1. *Much* precious time is lost; which if spent in praying, as in sporting with them, many a young mans soul had been blessed: Hence, sometimes dicing, feasting, excessive drinking, merry tales, which take off all spiritual joy: Hence filthy songs, and lascivious speeches; by which hopefull young men are insnared, and taught to do wickedly, and so knit to them; that it's death to part with them, and it's better to burn a whole Town, than to poyson one hopefull young man.

Next to communion with wanton women, I have ever looked on unnecessary fellowship with graceless men, as the next. Well, know it, you cast off the Lords government from you by his servants, which will be sad to answer for another day. And as the Prophet said to *Jehosaphat*, *Shouldest thou love them that hate the Lord? his wrath is against thee for this:* So say I to thee.

Quest. 3. *Quest.* 3. Inferiour power, when is that cast off, *viz.* in particular Cities or Townes by meaner persons?

Answ. *Answ.* I shall expresse it in three things chiefly.

1. 1. When Souldiers in particular Towns, cast off respect, care, conscience to the commands of their leaders set over them of God, and who under God are the walls of outward

ward ſafety for the Countrey; 'tis not now an artillery day, only I muſt ſpeak a word, becauſe it's a thing of moment, and matter of great conſcience with me. I ſuppoſe, in ſuch a place at leaſt, according to the Centurions example amongſt Heathens, *Mat.* 8. 9. a word of a Commander to any of them ſhould be a law. *I ſay to one, Go, hee goes.* Now for men to come when they liſt to thoſe meetings, and ſo time is loſt, and when they do come, no care; I had almoſt ſaid conſcience, to mind their work in hand, and do it with all their might, as it to which they are called; but Officers may ſpeak, charge, cry, yea ſtrike ſometimes, yet heed not, it's intolerable; but that *M*embers of Churches, which ſhould be examples to others ſhould do this, at leaſt it is but brutiſhneſſe. But *I* do wonder what rules of Conſcience ſuch do walk by, and if they do, where is their tenderneſſe to withdraw their ſhoulders from under the work? which if there be but Engliſh blood in a Chriſtian, he will endeavour to be perfect in his Art herein: but if grace, much more, that he may make one ſtone in the wall, and be fit to ſhed his blood, if need be, for the defence of Chriſts ſervants, Churches, and cauſe of God.

2. When any Town doth caſt off the power and rule of Townſmen, ſet by the ſupreme *Ma*giſtrate to make ſuch orders as may make for the publick weal thereof. I know ſometimes men may not be ſo able, wiſe, and carry matters imprudently: Town-orders may alſo ſometimes want that weight, that wiſdome, thoſe cautions, that mature conſideration as is meet, as alſo that due & prudent publication, that all may know of them, with records of them. But take Town-orders that be deliberatly made, prudently publiſhed, for the publick peace, profit, comfort of the place, to oppoſe theſe, or perſons that make theſe, with much care, fear, tenderneſſe; If I know any thing, is a ſin of a crying nature, provoking God, and caſting off his government. *I* confeſſe, if there be not care here, *I* know no way of living under any government of Church or Common-wealth, if the publick affaires of the Town be caſt off. *I* know ſometimes, godly and dear to Chriſt, may through weakneſſe, want of light, ſudden paſſion, and violent tentation, oppoſe here; but *I* am perſwaded if they be the Lords, he will in time humble them for it, and make them better after it. 2.

I know the anſwer to two queſtions would clear up

all the doubts about this matter. 1. What prudence ſhould be uſed in making lawes? 2. How farre thoſe humane lawes and Town-orders bind conſcience? But I caanot attend theſe: only fix things I would here ſay.

1: 1. The will and Law of God only hath Supreme abſolute and ſovereign power to bind conſcience (*i. e.* to urge it or conſtrain either to excuſe for doing well, or to accuſe for ſin; for conſcience is at liberty without this) this is a truth urged by all orthodox Proteſtant Divines againſt the Papiſts; ſo that no law can immediately bind conſcience but Gods.

1. 1. Becauſe he only is Lord of conſcience; becauſe he made it, and governs it, and only knows it; and hence he only is fit to preſcribe rules for it.

2. 2. Becauſe he only can ſave or deſtroy the ſoul; hath only power to make lawes for the ſoul to bind conſcience. *James* 4. 12. *There is one Law-giver, who is able to ſave or deſtry.* *Iſa.* 33. 22. for the law which ſo binds conſcience to a duty that the breach of it is a ſin, and that againſt God: we know that the leaſt ſin of it ſelf deſtroyes the ſoul, binds it over to death, but none have power to deſtroy it but the Lord himſelf.

3. 3. Becauſe the Law is ſufficient to guide the whole man, in its whole courſe, in all the actions or occaſions it meddles with, or takes in hand, even in civill as well as in Religious matters. *Prov.* 2. 9. *wiſdom teacheth every good path.* Pſal. 119. 11. *I have hid thy word, that I might not ſin.* Whatever one doth without a rule from the word, is not of faith. Hence the word deſcends to the moſt petty occaſions of our lives, it teacheth men how to look, *Pſal.* 131. 1. how to ſpeak, *Mat.* 12. 36. it deſcends to the plaiting of the hair, 1 *Pet.* 3. 5. moving of the feet, *Iſa.* 3. 16. and what is of Chriſtian liberty hath its freedome from the word: a man muſt give an account at the laſt day of every ſtirring of heart, thoughts, motives, and ſecret words; and if ſo, then it muſt be according to the rule of the word: and hence the word only hath abſolute power to bind *Maſters*, Servants, and Princes, how they govern, and people how they ſubject; and this the Lord hath done to make men take counſell from him, and walk in fear before him, and approve themſelves to him, eſpecially Townſmen in their places not to conſult without God.

2. 2. All good Laws and Orders inacted in any place by men,

men, are either expreſly mentioned in the word, or are to be collected and deducted from the word, as being able to give ſufficient direction herein. For all the authority of the higheſt power on earth in contriving of Laws, is in this alone, *viz.* to make prudent collection and ſpeciall application of the generall rules, recorded in Scripture, to ſuch ſpeciall and peculiar circumſtances which may promote the publick weal and good of perſons, places, proceedings. *Prov.* 8. 85. *By me Princes decree juſtice.* *Joſhua* 1. 7, 8. *Do what* Moſes *commanded, turn not on either hand.* *Object.* But I cannot ſee my way from hence alwayes. *Meditate* therefore *on it much,* and then thy way ſhall proſper, &c. *Many* things *Joſhua* did, not particularly ſet down by *Moſes*, but may be collected from it. *Deut.* 1. 17, 18, 19, 20. *The king is to have it, that he may prolong his dayes in the midſt of Iſrael,* in his Kingdome. What made *Rehoboam* to turn from theſe wayes? he thought he could not ſtabliſh his Kingdome without it; that was therefore the ruine of him and his Kingdome.

1. This appears, becauſe the word is ſufficient to direct, as hath been ſhewn; and hence all directions and rules are to be taken from hence. 1.

2. Becauſe either men have rules to walk by, or their own wills and apprehenſions are to be rules; but not ſo, becauſe mens wills are not only corrupt, but it's a peculiar prerogative to God to be obeyed, becauſe of his will. The reaſon or wiſdome which makes a rule, binds; which if it be right, is part of the law writ in the heart, which is moſt plainly ſeen and fully opened in the word, whence direction is to to be had. 2.

3. Humane lawes or orders thus, either ſet down in the word, or deducted from the word, and applied by thoſe that be in place in Townes; though they do not binde conſcience firſtly, as humane, or by humane power, (*i. e.* as publiſhed and impoſed by man;) yet they do binde ſecondarily, *i. e.* by vertue of the Law of God, wherein they are contained, or from whence they are derived and deducted, and according to which they are oppoſed; they are like *ſubpœnas* in the Kings name, or writ of arreſt, which by vertue of higher power challenge obedience; And thus to break theſe, is to ſin againſt God, and makes the conſcience liable to puniſhment from God: And the reaſon is. 3.

1. 1. Because men sin hereby against the Lord, and his holy righteous law, because Gods law is contained in these; and what is deducted from the word, is Gods word. 1 *Sam.* 8 7. *They have not rejected thee, but me.*

2. 2. Because they sin against the power of the Magistrate hereby, and against men in place, and so against more means; *Rom.* 13. 2. *He that resisteth the power, resisteth the Ordinance of God, i. e.* when they command thee according to God, which the Lord takes very ill; & the meaner the power is (as in Towns) the more terrible will the Lord be, when he comes to visit for it; hence *they receive to themselves damnation*, both by God and men.

'Tis true, if they be not thus according to the word, but rather against the generall rules of it: though men in Towns and places are not to be obeyed, yet subjection is their due even then; *i. e.* not to refuse obedience with contempt of their persons, places, power, or scandal to their proceedings, or profession of the Gospell. *Revile not the Lords high Priest; speak evill of no man*; but rather come in private, and confer with them; and hear what may be said, and be willing to give and take reason.

4. 4. Humane lawes and orders may be known to be according to the word, when they command or forbid such things, as really advance or tend to promote the publick good.

This I adde to answer that great question in many scrupulous minds. I cannot see (so ignorant) when an order is collected from the generall rules of the word; now this conclusion answers that doubt: For look as the main work of men in place, is to promote publick good; (and hence publick spirited men are to be chosen for it) so the principall rule is that which God and his Word gives them to walk by: whatever really doth tend to the advancement of that; Publish that, record that, and execute that, *Rom.* 13. 4. *He is Gods Minister to thee for good: i. e.* for the publick good. He is for mens private good, but 'tis in reference to publick good; that as private persons are to attend their work, so publick persons publick good. Hence, 1. If a law be made for publick hurt, that law is not of God.

2. 2. Hence, if the law be made only for the private good of themselves, or any particular person, and hurts the publick, that's not according to God. Admirable

was

was *Joshuas* spirit herein, *Josh.* 19. 49, 50.

3. If laws be only in appearance and pretence for publick good, and not really, they bind not; none must do evill, much lesse make a law of it, for publick good. Nothing more usuall than to make civill lawes and orders, crossing Gods law, and to pretend publick good; which ever prove the publick pests and plagues, and cankers of that place, as *Jeroboams* command for Religion. Some things are forbidden plainly, they make not for publick good, but hurt, *the statues of Omri.* Other things are indifferent in their nature, as swine to go abroad, or to be shut up; but inconvenient in their use, and hurtfull and scandalous, and that really to the generall. They are not for publick good, whatever is pretended. Somethings are plainly commanded, they are for the publick good circumstantiated; some things are indifferent in their nature, but convenient and comfortable in their use, those are indeed according to God. And such things may be discerned, they are so obvious and sensible, of such necessity and such profit, when duly considered by persons not blinded with their private interests.

4. Hence things indifferent, which may as well be left undone as done, and so publick good no way advanced, are not of God that any should restrain them: For the liberty which Christ hath purchased by his blood, and which Gods law gives; no law of man can abolish, or take away. It's the cry of the claw-backs of Princes, that they have power in things indifferent, *i. e.* such things which make as much for publick good, not to use, as use; the truth is, he hath least power here; because they are idle and Idol-lawes, no hurt, nor is there good in them: And hence, some of the most rigid Schoolmen maintain such lawes bind not conscience: we are not to seek our private only; now all human lawes are helps to seek publick. 4.

5. That lawes made for and according to God for publick good, if they do not destroy some mens particular; only for some time pinch and presse hard upon his particular good; or their particular good, men are bound in conscience here to submit. True, 1. If it were possible, all lawes for publick good, should hurt no particular man, and Townsmen, if they can; should help those that are hurt; yet because no lawes, but 5.

usually

uſually they will preſſe on ſome mans particular; the heavieſt end of a ſtaffe that is to be born, muſt fall on ſome mans ſhoulder, and ſuch lawes muſt be made. Hence a man is to bear and ſubmit cheerfully, *i.e.* from the rule of love, which will abate of particular for the generall good; love that more than mine own. 2. The law of juſtice, a man is to do as he would be done by; there is no man, but if his good was advanced by the generall, but would be conteut that ſome particular ſhould be pinched. 3. The law of nature: The ſtomack is content to be ſick, and body weak, to heal the whole body. Hence Chriſtians ſhould not think that Towuſmen are careleſſe, unjuſt, and aimed at their hurt, when it is thus. 1 *King.* 12. 4.

6. 6. A meer Penal law when 'tis broke; the forfeiture is ſufficient for the ſatisfaction of the offence, or treſpaſſe; but not in a mixt Law.

1. Firſt, A Penall law is about things of ſmall moment,

2. Secondly, 'Tis not made by way of command, but with an *aut*, a *disjunctive copula:* and is indeed rather a proviſo than a law.

3. Thirdly, It is in the mind of the law, make ſatisfactory if the penalty be payed, though the law be not performed, becauſe the publick good in the mind of the Law-maker is known to be ſet forward that way as by obedience to the law. In theſe caſes penalty is enough; but if the law be mixt, *i. e.* there is a command it ſhall de done; and Law-giver is ſad, though penalty being paid, as being about a matter of weight; it may be the livelyhood and comfort of men, as keeping hogs out of corn, and peace in a Town, that there be no complaining; here the penalty will not ſatisfie, becauſe this is no penall law, but a law indeed deducted from rules of the word of God; as it is in theft, he that ſteals, ſhall pay fourfold; or that brawles, ſhall be duckt in the water: Suppoſe one ſhould ſay, I will ſuffer my ſervant to ſteal or revile; I hope 'iis no offence if he ſuffer the penalty. Yes, but it is, beeauſe it is not a meer penall law; the thing is of weight, peace between neighbours, ſo peace in a Town. It's a flat charge not to break it, and thou knowſt ſuch is the honeſty and juſtice of a *Magiſtrate*, that he will ſay, I would rather you would never do thus, than offer thoſe to do. Hence in Gods law Chriſt muſt ſuffer, and do alſo, becauſe Gods law is not meerly penal; but doing the

the thing, gives more content than the puniſhment.

3. When ſervants caſt off all ſubjection to their Governours. Families being the members and foundations of Towns, and ſo of Common-wealths. When they are not obedient; but anſwer again; if they be let alone, then idle; if rebuked and curb'd, then ſtubborn and proud, and worſe for chiding, and find fault with their wages, and victuals, and lodging; weary, and vex out the heart of Maſter and *Miſtreſſe*, and make them weary of their lives, and their God alſo almoſt ſometimes; and that by ſuch profeſſing Religion, and all that they might be from under the yoke. 3. *Tit.* 2.9,10. 1 *Pet.* 3.18: *Eph.* 6.5.

And here I cannot but ſet a mark upon ſervants broke looſe from their *Maſters*, and got out of their time, that are under no Family nor Church-government; nor deſiring of it, or preparing for it; but their reigns are on their necks. I confeſſe, if under heathen *Maſters*, then deſire liberty rather; but when men will live as they liſt, without any over them, and unfit to rule themſelves; I much doubt, whether this be according to God. 1 *Pet.* 3.18. *Tit.* 2.9,10. *Eph.* 6.5

1. Hence they come to live idly, and work when they liſt. 1.

2. Hence men of publick uſe, can have little uſe but when they pleaſe of them. 2.

3. When they be with them, they have no power to correct or examine, and call them to account, in regard of ſpirituall matters. 3.

4. Hence they lye in wait to oppreſſe men that muſt have help from them, and ſo will do what they liſt. 4.

5. Hence they break out to drunkenneſs, whoring, and looſe company. 5.

6. Hence they make other ſervants unruly, and to deſire liberty. 6.

Now examine and try theſe things: Is the Kingdome of Chriſt come into us? that though there be a law in our members warring, yet there is a law of the mind warring againſt it, and delighting in the will of Chriſt, and ſetting him up as chief. Are we under the Kingdome of Chriſt in his Church and Common-wealth; ſo as the ſoul is willing in the day of the Lords power, though there be, and have been ſome pangs of reſiſtance againſt perſons and againſt Ordinances; ſo as 'tis thy liberty to be ſubject to Chriſt in his Ordinances, in his ſervants; and 'tis thy bondage to be otherwiſe, and thou longeſt for that day, that

that the Lord would ſubdne all thoſe boiſtrous luſts, and pride, and paſſions; and bruiſe ſin, Satan and ſelf under their feet? Then *I* ſay, as the Lord, *Iſa.* 33. 20, 21, 22. *Look upon Zion, the City of your ſolemnity, &c.* See *Rom.* 8. 7, 1.

But if the heart grows looſe and licentious, and breaks the Lords bonds and yokes, and will be led by your own fleſhly ends and luſts, and ſo go on quietly: Be you aſſured, this truth ſhall have a time to take hold of ſuch ſpirits; and know it aſſuredly, 'tis not to be in Chriſts Family or Kingdome; 'tis not ſcrambling for promiſes, catching at Gods grace, talking of aſſurance of Gods love, which will ſhelter you from the wrath of *the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords; to whom God hath ſworn, That every knee ſhall bow.* 'Tis ſervice and ſubjection which the Lord aims at, and which the Lord looks for. *I* know 'tis Gods grace which only can ſave; but it will never ſave when it is turned into licentiouſneſſe.

Do not ſay, There is no danger of it, here where we have ſuch means. and ſuch liberties are.

Anſw. 1. *Anſw.* 1. Never ſuch danger of being licentious, as in places of liberty; when no bit nor bridle of externall tyranny to curb in.

2. 2. Look on the Kingdom of *Judah* here, which in one year all fell.

3. 3. Why doth the Lord exerciſe us with wants and ſtraits? 'tis to humble us, and abate our unrulineſſe. And 'tis the Lords quarrel with his beſt people to this day; deſperate rebellious hearts, that cloſe not with his Government.

Do not ſay, we know not how bondage ſhould come here, though we ſhould caſt off the Lords Government.

Anſw. 1. *Anſw.* 1. The Lord can let looſe the natives againſt us. *Ahab* kills 1000000 of *Benhadads* men, but afterwards within ſeven yeares he returns again.

2. 2. The Lord can raiſe up brambles, and *Abimelechs* to be the King of the trees, when the Olives and the Vines are loth to forſake their places, and to loſe their fatneſſe and ſweetneſſe.

3. 3. The Lord can turn the hearts of thoſe in power againſt people, and let Satan ſowe ſuſpicions, and ſowe ſeditions and claſhings.

4. 4. The Lord can leave us into one anothers hands to oppreſſe, to take away the nether milſtones.

5. If

5. If none of these, Satan, nay Christ himself will come out with garments dipt in blood. 5.

3. Do not say, 'Tis not so, there is sweet subjection, *i.e.* 'tis so, and blessed be God for it, yet beware, I speak to prevent. But yet 1. Some seem to do so, and yet are not so, 2 *Cor.* 10. 4, 5. *Mighty to pull down every high thought*, who attains this, who can be thus? yet there are means mighty for this end, not that all be abolished, but all are abolishing. 2. Others otherwise, openly how zealous for an opinion, when it should be death to differ, & things in your own heart lying miserably waste, and some wretched lust the root of all, for which Gods Saints mourn in secret. Let such know, that will not be ruled by Christ, or his servants or ordinances, but will have them to rule them, and not to be ruled by them. The Lords chains are near, and therefore now take your time and come in submit to the Lord, and do as these here did, acknowledge the Lord to be righteous, and turn unto the Lord. 3.

Use 6. Of thankfulnesse, for our present liberties and freedome from the bondage of men, bondage of conscience, bondage of Satan and sin: need there is of laying this use seriously to heart, considering two things principally. 1. The general complaints of the Countrey, as they of *Jericho*, 2 *Kings* 2. 10. *The waters are bad, and the ground barren*, and these are engraven in Marble, all other our liberties are written on the water. 2. The disgrace and reproach cast upon Gods people and wayes of God, and that unjustly, which I am afraid to mention; whence there grows a contempt of them, and the rivers of *Damascus* now are better than *Jordan*. Oh beloved, if it be an heavy hand of God to be under bondage, then look on it as a speciall grace of God to free us from bondage. *Deut.* 32. 11, 12. *The Lord alone did lead them, &c.* and *Moses*, *chap.* 33. 29. when he had blessed them, *Happy art thou Oh* Israel, *a People saved by the Lord*. And the greater cause we have to do this, a People that have abused all liberties. *Is.* 9. 8, 9, 10. He laments it, but yet is thankfull for it to Gods grace: no man that can say but he may be as holy as he will, and none to curb or snib. *Use 6.* *Jer.* 2. 20.

1: Means, Consider what all the liberties Gods people enjoy have cost, *Gal.* 5. *Christ hath made you free, i. e.* by his blood. Liberty of Conscience from the bondage, not of Jewish, but of Antichristian Ceremonies, and Government, 1.

Government, and Preſſures: Liberty of will from any ſin; 'tis by Chriſts blood and coſt, that (as I am perſwaded) our liberties have coſt Saints their blood. The tears, prayers and blood of men are much; but of Chriſt much more, and are they not worth thanks that are of this price? The great reaſon why unthankfulneſſe comes in, is; becauſe they coſt ſo much, as loſſe of eſtate, of wife, or of childe by ſea; doſt thou repent now? Chriſt doth not repent that his blood hath been paid for them; and if they be of ſo little value, as there 'tis ſaid, *He repented that he made man*, ſo may he that ever he gave them ſuch glorious liberties.

2. 2. Conſider oft of the ſad condition of them that be in bondage. Men in bondage prize liberty, and think them happy that enjoy it; but men out of it do not. How ſad is the conſideration of them that be in bonds, it will make thy heart ſympathize with them, and bleſſe God for your deliverance. Hence ſaith Chriſt, *Luke* 22. 20. *When you ſee* Jeruſalem *compaſt with enemies, &c. flie to the mountains, and wo to them that give ſuck.* Conſider them that are taken with the Turks; if you were in their condition you would ſay ſo; to bring forth little ones to the murderer or idolater, *Iſa.* 42. 22. and 26. Mens hearts failing for fear, this you ſhould ſee ſome-where. A mote or a thorn is a little thing, but no man would have it alwayes vexing for all the eſtate he hath, if he hath any eye or tenderneſſe in it; ſo thoſe ſmall matters for which the Saints have ſuffered, and for which God is provoked, and under which ſome have roared, and others have been loaded one after another; 'tis worth a world; oh, bleſſe God for it: but conſider thoſe that be under the dominion of ſin and Satan, ſo ſtrong and miſerable; ſin ſo dear, that there is not ſo much as a ſigh under that; be thankfull for that.

3. 3. Labour to maintain in the heart a holy fear of abuſing liberties, every one in his place; for what makes them deſpiſed, but principally the abuſe of them; in ſuch a Congregation there was ſuch contention, ſuch affront to the Elders, there is that degenerating of ſpirit, and back ſliding from God, that men grow worſe under means than ever, and ſo muſt be if men grow not better. *Deut.* 6. 10, 12. The Lord exhorts them, that when they be at liberty, they would not then forget the Lord, but then fear. 'Tis *Luthers* note on the place: *When in trouble,*

trouble, you rejoyce; but when in peace, you fear. I'le only name the sins of liberty.

1. Take heed of a Prayerleſſe ſpirit, and that that lamp go not out. Men under ſome preſſures cry, and 'tis long before they do cry under them, and under their ſin; but then at laſt they do, and when the Lord gives liberty, though they have the guilt of the ſame ſins, and more ſins lie on them, yet then like Marriners, when the ſtorms are over, fall aſleep. Its ſtrange that *Iſrael* under *Pharaoh* cried, and under Gods afflicting hand in denying them water murmured. True thankfulneſſe will help to prize what liberty affords.

2. An unloving ſpirit to the Saints. It's that I have oft ſaid; ſouldiers when they are ſet againſt a common enemy are all one, but when at liberty, then they fling javelins at one anothers heads, differ in opinion, and in heart and affection, & 'tis not death ſo to do. Take heed of a rigid, cenſorious, unloving ſpirit.

3. Extreme ignorance how to uſe our liberties; and hence running to extremes. As we ſay of Chriſt, There is good enough in him, but men know not how to fetch and improve it: ſo there is great advantage in liberties; but men miſſe of it through their ignorance and abuſe. Hence many times more hurt done by an Admonition than by the ſin, when adminiſtred in paſſion, and without compaſſion. Hence under pretence of liberty, extream licentiouſneſſe.

4. Imperiouſneſſe of ſpirit, ariſing from a frothy emptineſſe, and an overweening opinion, and conceitedneſſe of their own abilities and wiſdom above others: and hence will not be led, (being at liberty) by the Counſell and Advice of others. It's naturall for man to affect ſovereignty, and when the time comes of liberty, then it hath a vent: *Who made thee a Lord and Judge over us?* though in bondage, much more in liberty; they think Wills Commonwealth is in their heads chiefly, and hence will not be ruled by Gods ordinances; and hence if once taken with an opinion, hardly ever removed, &c.

5. Reſting with liberties and in liberties. *We were never in bondage*, John 8. 33. *yet ſervants to ſin. We be* Abrahams *ſeed*, better than all the world; yet under all the power of ſin and Satan, and muſt not be told of their wayes, but hate them that cenſure them for their ſins. Men in bondage are like ſick men, that will cry if they were

were in another bed, oh then they should be well; but they must first be cured of their disease.

4. 4. Make use of liberties. He that hath them, but sees not so much glory in them, or gets not much good from them; he will be no more thankfull than one that hath large grounds may walk at liberty, but the trees for want of manuring bear no fruit, nor ground corn through sloth; such a man will starve there. Look as they, *Deut.* 15.5, 10, 11. they were *to bring the first fruits, and present them before the Lord, and rejoyce in all:* so should you if ever you be thankfull for them, bring the first fruits to the Lord, and think there is more behind, and more in heaven.

Object. *Object. But our outward streights are many, and temptations sad.*

Answ. *Answ.* If Christ himself should come on earth, what would you have with him? would you have him come and set up an earthly Paradise? would you have better entertainment than he, who had not that which Foxes and Birds had? or would you have him come from his Crosse, and then you will make him King? if you despise his ordinances and liberties because of wants, you would despise himself if he were present. But you will reply and say, What if we can have both? If that can be, and Christ cals to take both, refuse not his love. But it may be an heavy indictment against some at the last day, in that they forsake Christ, because he is poor and naked; for they are therefore called to cloath him: and this will be your Peace, and you will be no losers your selves another day.

2. 2. Suppose he doth keep us low; yet *Psal.* 145.13,14. *His dominion is alway, and raiseth up all that are bowed down.* Oh be humbled; he is said, *Deut.* 32. 13. *to make the people suck honey out of the rock, and oyl out of the flint,* sweetnesse and mercy out of the hardest condition.

3. 3. They that are not recompenced for their enjoyment of liberties, by the spirituall refreshings which the Lord gives, shewing them more of their own hearts; the Lord proclaims liberty to them to depart. I am perswaded the whole Countrey would flourish the more.

4. 4. Lament rather your own vilenesse, who in the midst of all mercy, know not how to use, but abuse our liberties: and hence the Lord forsakes us, as *Ezra* 9. 8, 10, 11. *What grace hath been shewed us? what shall we say, that*

after

after this, &c? Wouldeſt thou not be angry with us till thou haſt conſumed us? Pſal. 81. 13, 16. *Oh that my People had heard my voice, I would have ſubdued their enemies.* God would not be wanting unto us, if we were not to him.

Take therefore that example to imitate, in *Acts* 9. 31. *Having reſt, they were edified:* if we be not ſo, truly, as none have the like liberties; ſo no bondage ſo ſad, no where ſuch poverty, no where ſuch anguiſh of conſcience, no where ſuch ſpirit and power of ſin, no where ſuch ſad anger; if in practice we be unthankfull, or can mouth and ſpeak againſt long Sermons, and againſt the Countrey and Chriſtians, or in hearts undervalue them; and when you ſee *Indians* riſe, *Brambles*, *Abimelechs* and *Shebnas* raiſed, &c. then know this is for abuſe of liberty.

Uſe 7. Of exhortation, to come under Chriſts Government, and be in his ſervice; leſt ye come to know the difference between it and ſome other by experience. *Uſe 7.*

Mot. 1. You muſt be either under Chriſts yoke, or Satans and ſins, and ſo all other miſeries: and therefore as *Joſhua* ſaid, ſo ſay I to you; *Chooſe you whom you will ſerve.* *Mot. 1.*

Mot. 2. Conſider the difference between the ſervice of the Lord and *Shiſhak*. *Mot. 2.*

1. The government of others, tyrannicall proud men, or ſin or Satan, or outward miſeries; 'tis full of rigour, force and cruelty. *Ezek.* 34. 4. *With force and cruelty have ye ruled them.* But Chriſts Government is there ſhewen to be in mercy, and full of mercy; though ſometimes loſt, he will fetch thee in again; though ſick and weak, he will heal thee again. *verſ.* 16. *Deut.* 4. 6. 'Tis *for thy good* the Lord hath no need of thy ſervice, &c. True it is, the Lord may ſhew his people hard things, and give them ſad miſeries; but theſe wounds do not kill them, only make way for healing the diſtempers of their hearts, that are in his poor weak ones; and his end is to bring them to himſelf. 1.

2. Their government is in it ſelf hard and bitter. To ſerve a luſt now, 'tis a torment, ſometimes to conſcience, if that be awake; if not, 'tis a curſe of curſes: much reluctancy againſt it; much chiding after it, and God hides himſelf; dreadfull fears, and heart it ſelf unquiet; but Chriſts yoke is eaſie and his burden light; his aſſiſtance, and preſence, and love, and peace makes it ſo, and that daily, and at death eſpecially. 2.

3. 3. There is little recompence for their ſervice; the beſt that *Saul* can give, are Olive-fields and Vine-yards; but anguiſh of conſcience after the work is done: But the Lord gives a Kingdome; and not a word or thought, but there is a Book of remembrance writ; not a cup of cold water, or rag to any of Chriſts naked ſervants, but it will be recompenced. *You have followed me, you ſhall ſit on thrones.*

Mot. 3. *Mot.* 3. Conſider how fain the Lord would have you under his Government; for many will ſay, I have refuſed ſo oft; and what ſhall I now do? the Lord will caſt me by. True, he may do ſo, and you may be glad if the Lord will honour you in doing his work. Yet, *Prov.* 2. 23. *Return you ſcorners at my reproof, and I'le power out my Spirit upon you. Jer.* 36. 3, 7. *Read* (ſayes God) *the words of the Roll to them: It may be they will hear, and preſent their ſupplications before the Lord, and turn every man from his evill way, that I may forgive their iniquity and their ſin.* Read the place if you can without tears. You that have departed from God and Chriſt, and provoked Gods wrath, when there is but little hope left it may be; Oh, yet read the Roll.

Mot. 4. *Mot.* 4. Once Chriſts, and under his Government, you ſhall never be caſt off; *As ſin hath reigned unto death, ſo ſhal grace reign unto eternall life*, Rom. 5. 21. *He will beſtow on you the ſure mercies of* David, *by an everlaſting Covenant*, Iſa. 55. 5.

Queſt. *Queſt.* But wherein ſhould *I* ſubmit to the Lord?

Anſw. *Anſw.* None have power to rule conſcience but Chriſt, give him therefore this glory; that wherein he bindes conſcience; conſcience not out of fear, but love may indeed ſubmit. *I* have inſtanced the particulars formerly, yet more diſtinctly. There be two great commands or charges of Chriſt, that lye upon all mens conſciences to whom the Goſpell comes, and therein lyes our ſervice of him generally: Which two *I* name, becauſe there we think we are free, or do not know our liberty.

1. 1. Firſt, The command of Chriſt is, that every one to whom the Goſpell comes, and is preached, do believe, *i. e.* receive Chriſt Jeſus in all his fulneſſe in the Goſpel. *John* 1. 12. For that is to believe; in which command lies Gods offer. 1 *John* 5. 23. *This is his commandment, that ye believe*, John 6. 25, 37, 38. *This is the work of God, that ye believe.* Now here men think they are free.

1. They

1. They ſay they are unworthy; and hence they ſay, Depart from me, Lord, I am a ſinfull man; as if Gods grace was built on mans worthineſſe. 2. Becauſe unhumbled, whereas Gods grace calls in men unhumbled. *Rev.* 8. 17, 18. For Gods call and offer is generall though none but the humble will hearken to it. But there are none, but it may be ſaid to them; If they can believe, let them. 3. Becauſe Chriſt is not theirs, & are they bound to believe he is? Whereas the firſt act of faith, is not to believe Chriſt is mine, then men were bound to believe a lie. But to receive Chriſt as a woman her husband, that he may be mine by faith; and ſo a man may know and ſay, he is mine. The Goſpell doth no where ſay to any man, Chriſt is thine; but if thou receive him, he is thine, and conſequently the Spirit ſpeaks ſo alſo. 4. Becauſe they cannot believe, unleſſe they ſhould preſume; as if the Goſpell bound the conſcience of none to believe, but them that were able to believe it, and receive Chriſt in it: yet 'tis otherwiſe: for it binds all to receive Chriſt Jeſus; to go up and poſſeſſe him, to feed, eat and drink, and live for ever. And I will leave this one undeniable argument; If men are liable to eternall condemnation at the great and laſt day, and to bear the eternal wrath of God and Chriſt alſo, for diſobeying the Goſpell, for refuſing Chriſt and the offer of his grace therein: Then thoſe mens conſciences are bound to obey the Goſpell; *i.e.* to believe and receive Chriſt now in this life.——But all that have the Goſpell preached to them, are liable to eternall condemnation, for diſobedience to it. *John* 3. 18, 19. *Pſal.* 2. 12. *Kiſſe the Son, leſt he be angry.* So, 2 Theſ. 2. 8, 9. *He comes to render vengeance on them that obey not the Goſpell.* Rom. 2. 16. *The Lord ſhall judge the ſecrets of all hearts by my Goſpell.* That is, where ever the Goſpell comes; for they that have no law, having no law ſhall not be judged by it: But men that have had the Goſpell, ſhall be judged by it, and therefore are bound to obedience thereunto.

The ſerious conſideration of which one truth, is enough to draw all to Chriſt from the power of unbelief; eſpecially they that ſay, I cannot, or ought not believe. For the reaſon why men do not come, is,

1. They think the Goſpell concerns not them; what doth the Lord ſay to me, come ſo vile, and ſinfull? yes, that he doth; if there was no ſuch law, there could be no tranſgreſſion or condemnation. 1.

2. 2. They think they ſhall preſume. No, if conſcience be bound to it, 'tis no preſumption, to keep a Sabbath aright, or to receive Chriſt as God offers him: Oh, this quiets conſcience.

3. 3. The Lord layes his chain on the moſt tender place of conſcience, as it will anſwer it at the great day, or will have any peace; take heed you refuſe not ſo great ſalvation.

4. 4. 'Tis a chain, not of bondage, but of liberty, and mercy, and love: Come and receive, not a Kingdome; but Chriſt, Peace, pardon, and grace freely; which may draw the heart, as it will at the great and laſt day. *Come ye bleſſed, take a Kingdome*; take a Chriſt prepared for you from before the foundation of the world. Oh that this might ſound in your eares: This is the firſt and chiefeſt; without this, all your obedience is hypocriſie, and abominable; but this will pleaſe, and then all poor obedience ſhall pleaſe.

2. Secondly, Love unto the whole will of Chriſt; eſpecially to that part of it, to love thoſe that be the members of Chriſt. Some Chriſtians they believe, and feeling a heart ſo croſſe to Chriſt, and the will of God; think they are from under the government of God and Chriſt, & ſo from under the grace of Chriſt, (and the argument is ſtrong, if true;) but why not under his government? becauſe they find daily a ſpirit ſo croſſe to the will of Chriſt; and hence under continuall fears of condemnation. Oh but conſider, haſt thou no love to the will of Chriſt and law of God? (for if any believe, this is found in him) if ſo, then under Chriſts Government. *Rom.* 8. 2. *The Law of the ſpirit of life hath made me free.* What is that Law? See *Chap.* 7. 23, 24. Spirit of *delight in the Law in the inner man*, and mourning for contrary captivity. Know therefore, though you cannot do all; yet love the whole will of God, and mourn where you do not; and then ſay. Now no condemnation. Do not ſay, 'Tis impoſſible. Oh, here is mens wo, and tryall of ſubjection to Chriſts will! How do you love it, love his Sabbaths and Ordinances, becauſe of his love to you? How do's this conſtrain you?

In particular; Love the people of God, that is, his ſpeciall commandment, 1 *John* 3. 23. *John* 13. 34. But now the want hereof, or the contrary hereto: As when a man ſhall become, 1. A Diſtaſter. 2. A Condemner.

3. A

3. A Cenſurer, and whiſperer. 4. A Scoffer. 5. If met on a Bridge, an oppoſer of the Truths or ſervants of God. This is that which kindles wrath, and wherein the inward venome of hypocriſie appears. There's many duties neglected, and not that ſpirit of prayer, and holy conferences amongſt Chriſtians; yet do you keep love to them; that what you cannot do your ſelves, yet you love others that can do it, and account it your bleſſedneſſe to be like them, and daily mourn under your neglects; that in every thing, the Goſpel is not adorned by you: & on the other ſide, although you have many duties, Sabbaths, and good acts; yet if not love, all is vile. I fear 'tis not mens joy, ſweetneſſe, delight to hear the leaſt good word that falls from a good mans lips, but rather the truths and things of God deſpiſed; if ſo, then look for wo. And for Members of Chriſt, their lives not deſired, their deaths not lamented; but you know how to contend, and are careleſſe though the Goſpell and God be ſlandered; you caſt off the Lords yoke. It was one mans ſpeech, that the great ſin of this Countrey will be hatred of the Saints, a ſcornful contempt of them; It will come by degrees, firſt diſtaſte, and then cenſure and contemne. Oh, but if herein you ſubmit, herein Chriſt is honoured, and Goſpell glorified in love and amiableneſſe: Not in a rigorous auſterity of ſpirit, and diabolicall cenſorioufneſſe; but in word and deed, countenance and geſture, comforting and encouraging one another.

When *David* would know what to do; *Truly* ſaith he, *my goodneſſe extends not to thee; but to the Saints, in whom is all my delight*; Oh therefore ſubmit here; this conſcience calls for, and Chriſt muſt have.

To conclude with a word for help here;

Means 1. Look to Gods Ordinances, not as they be in themſelves; but as appointed of God, to communicate an almighty power of ſpirit to them that wait on the Lord in them. An almighty power muſt overcome, and go on Conquering, and to Conquer. How ſhall we have this by Gods Ordinances? Some more principall, as Word and Sacraments; ſome leſſe, How ſhall we partake of this power in them? Look not on them in themſelves, but as appointed and ſanctified, and ſo as glorious. And there pray and wait, and look for the *Means* 1.

power; nay, believe you shall receive this power. As the waters of *Jordan* to *Naaman*; How did they cleanse? When he lookt upon them without the command and promise, he despised them, and so found not the benefit of them, but afterwards hee found the benefit of them, when he washed seven times in attendance to the appointment of God. Brethren, it is but go and wash here. 1 *Cor.* 10. 5.

ns 2. *Means* 2. Know your disobedience, the breadth of it: Some things Christians see, and pray against them, and then all is well; but see the breadth of evill in your disobedience. There is something that doth oppose God in every lawfull thing, in whole or in part, (for flesh is in it) or else you are blinded if you see it not. Oh therefore feel the breadth of evill in it; that being sensible of, and humbled under, and striving against your continuall disobedience; every thought may be brought into subjection and obedience to Christ.

OF

OF *INEFFECTUALL* HEARING.

JOHN. 5. 37.

Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor ſeen his ſhape.

FRom the 31. *Verſ.* to the end of this *Chapter*, Our Saviour proves that he was the *Meſſiah* to come, from four teſtimonies.

1. From the teſtimony of *John*; the firſt, yet the leaſt, yet very ſtrong and full, *verſ.* 32, 33. 1.

2. From the teſtimony of his works, greater than that of *John*, *verſ.* 36. 2.

3. From the teſtimony of the Father, by his voice from heaven, *verſ.* 37. 3.

4. From the voice of the Scriptures, the higheſt of all, and ſurer than a voice from heaven, (2 *Pet.* 1. 19.) *verſ.* 39, 46. 4.

Now theſe words are annexed to the third teſtimony, which I told you is the voyce of God from heaven, ſet

down, *Mat.* 3. 17. For this Teſtimony of the Father is not the inward teſtimony of the Spirit only; Becauſe Chriſt ſpeaks of publick, and evident teſtimonies in this place; nor is it meant of the teſtimony of the Father in the Scripture; for that is a diſtinct teſtimony; and though the Father doth teſtifie of Chriſt in the Scriptures; yet 'tis not as his teſtimony, no more than the teſtimony of *John*, and of his works, whereby the Father did teſtifie alſo: Nor is it probable that our Saviour would at this time, omit that famous teſtimony of the Father at his Baptiſm; which if it be not here, is no where in this *Chapter*. Beſide, how is this teſtimony the Fathers more than the Spirits; but then, being called his Son, he did evidently declare himſelf to be the Father that ſpake. Laſtly, the Spirits teſtimony is ſpoken of, as the teſtimony of *Moſes* and the Prophets, *Verſ.* 46, 47. *For had ye believed* Moſes, *ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me*, verſ. 47. *For if ye beleeve not his writings how, ſhall ye believe my words.*

Now our Saviour in theſe words anſwers an *Objection* which the Jewes (ever conceited of their own knowledge) might make. We know the Father as well as you; and yet we know no ſuch teſtimony that he gives. Chriſt anſwers, You do not know him; for the certain knowledge of a thing, is either by ſeeing or hearing; now you never ſaw him nor heard him; you have therefore no acquaintance with him.

So that the words contain 1. Chriſts fearfull accuſation of the Jews to be ignorant of God, 2. The aggravation and extent of it, at no time, *i. e.* not only at Baptiſm, but at no other time, in any Miniſtery, or in any Scripture, &c.

Queſt. 1. *Queſt.* 1. *What is it not to ſee his ſhape nor hear his voice?*

Anſw. *Anſw.* Some think they are metaphorical ſpeeches, to expreſſe their ignorance of God; Now though this be the ſcope, and the general truth, yet I conceive, the Lord ſpeaking particularly, and knowing what he ſpake, intends ſomething particularly: and it is a rule, never to flie to metaphors, where there can be a plain ſenſe given. There is therefore two degrees of true knowledge of God in this life, or 'tis attained unto by a double means.

1. By hearing of him, for hence our faith comes by the Word.

2. By

2. By hearing thus from him, the mind also comes to have a true *Idea* of God, as he reveals himself in the Word and Means by the Spirit, *Job* 42. 5. *I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee*; and this is the *shape* here spoken of, not bodily and carnall. Now Christ doth professe that they did want both. Carnal and unregenerate hearts, neither hear Gods voyce, nor have a right *Idea* of God in their minds, but become vain in their minds, though they have means of knowing, and their foolish hearts are darkned; the wiser they be, the more foolish they grow. 2.

2. *At no time, i. e.* neither at baptism, nor else in any mans Ministery, nor in any of the Scriptures which you read, and where the Lord speaks. 2.

3. But did they not hear the voice of God at Christs baptism, and at the Mount when Christ preach't, when the Scriptures were opened every Lords day, and at other times amongst them? 3.

Answ. No, they never heard it. It's a strange thing, that such men that read, heard, preach'd, remembred the Scriptures, and could tell you mysteries in titles, never heard the voice of God; and yet it is most true. *Answ.*

Observat. That many men may a long time together know and hear the Word of God written and spoken, yet never hear the Lord speaking that Word, no not so much as one word, tittle or syllable; no not so much at once, at any time. This was the estate of the Jews, and this is the estate of all unregenerate men. Hence Christ, *Luke* 19. 41. laments and weeps over *Jerusalem*, saying, *Oh that thou hadst known in this thy day, &c.* *Observ.*

1. *Quest. How did the Jewes hear, and yet not hear God speaking?* *Quest.* 1.

Answ. There is a twofold word, or rather a double declaration of the same word. 1. There is Gods externall or outward word, containing letters and syllables, and this is his externall voice. 2. There is God internal word and voice, which secretly speaks to the heart, even by the externall word, when that only speaks to the ear. The first the Jewes did hear, at Christs Baptism, in Christs Ministery, and in reading the Scriptures, and when they did hear it, it was Gods word they heard, full of glory, and so they heard the word spoken, but only man speaking it: the other comes to few, who hear not only the word spoken, but God speaking the word, *Answ.*

Rom.

Rom. 10. 18, 19. *Iſrael did hear*, but *Iſrael did not know*. Chriſt ſpeaks in parables; Hence *in ſeeing they did not ſee*, Luke 8. 10. And this is one way, how 'tis true that Chriſt ſayes, *They never heard his voice*. As 'tis with a painted Sun on the wall, you ſee the Sun and Stars, but there is a difference between ſeeing this and the Sun and Starres themſelves, wherein is an admirable glory: go to a painted Sun, it gives you no heat, nor cheriſheth you not; ſo it is here, &c.

2. This inward word is double. 1. Ineffectuall, (though inward.) 2. Effectual. 1. Ineffectuall, is that which hath ſome inward operation upon the heart, but it attains not Gods end to bring a man into a ſtate of life; and thus, *Heb.* 6. 2, 5. *Many taſted of the good word of God, yet fell away*. And ſuch a heart is compared to a field which a man plowes and ſowes, and rain falls on it, and yet the end is not attained, *it brings forth thiſtles*; and this many Jewes did hear, and hence had ſome kind of faith in Chriſt. 2. Effectual, is that which hath ſuch an inward efficacy upon mens hearts, as that God attains his end theteby, *Iſa.* 55. 11. and brings men to a ſtate of life, of which Chriſt ſpeaks, *John* 6. 45. and this voice none but the Elect hear; and of this Chriſt ſpeaks here, as appears, *v.* 38. *Him whom he ſent, ye beleeve not*. Hence it is you have heard God at no time. Hence he ſpeaks of ſuch a hearing & knowing, ſuch a hearing outwardly, as is accompanied with ſuch a hearing inwardly, *Joh.* 14. 17. ſo that many men may hear the word ſpoken outwardly, but never inwardly: they may hear it inwardly, but never effectually, tranſlating them from ſtate to ſtate, from death to life, from life to life and glory. No ſenſe of the Majeſty of God ſpeaking, nor effectuall hearing of the word ſpoken. When the Sun is down the Moon may ariſe, but yet a man is cold and dark; but when the Sun ariſeth, oh it warms, nouriſheth and cheriſheth, &c. *nothing is hid from it*; ſo it is here, when the Lord ſpeaks inwardly and effectually to the heart.

Reaſon 1. *Reaſ.* 1. From that great diſtance and infinite ſeparation of mens ſouls from God, that though God cals, yet they can't hear no more than men a 1000 mile off. *Eph.* 2. 1. *men are dead in ſin*. Now what is ſpirituall death, but ſeparation of the ſoul from God, and God from it. A dead man cannot hear one word at no one time, he was not dead if he could. Mens minds are far from God, and hearts

hearts alſo, that they are neither ſtricken with the ſight of his glory, nor ſenſe and ſavour of his goodneſſe, but muſt be vain, and have worldly hearts in the Church, nay adulterous eyes, or if they liſten, God is gone from them, and from his Word alſo, *Hoſ.* 5. 6.

Reaſ. 2. From the mighty and wonderfull ſtrange power of Satan, which blinds their eyes they cannot ſee nor hear, 2 *Corinthians* 4. 4. never ſuch clear light, never ſuch an effectuall Word, as that of the Apoſtles; yet it was *hid*; why? *The God of this world blinded them*, either he will keep ſuch a noiſe and lumber in their heads, that they cannot hear God ſpeaking for the noiſe, or elſe turn himſelf into an Angel of light, and ſpeak, and by their light will blind them, that the light in them ſhall be darkneſſe. *Rom.* 1. 22. When men with naturall light began to be moſt wiſe, then they became the greateſt fools: ſo 'tis with other knowledge of Scripture, and things they hear. Happy were it for many a man if he had never heard nor ſeen; for that which he hath heard and ſeen keeps him from hearing. *Tyre* and *Sidon* would hear ſooner than *Capernaum* that heard moſt. *Reaſon.* 2. *Rev.* 12. 9. *Rom.* 1. 22.

Reaſ. 3. From the righteous judgement of God, in leaving men to be blinded and made deaf, from and by the means whereby they ſhould hear and know; that as it is with the Saints, all evill things are for their good, ſo all good things are for their hurt, *Iſa.* 6: 10. the meriting cauſe is unbelief and ſin, but the deep and hidden riſe of all is Gods eternal dereliction of them, God never intended love, ſpeciall love to them; hence he never ſpeaks one word to them; 2 *Cor.* 4. 3. *John* 6. 65. *Many were offended at his words and forſook him.* Now to take off this offence, I ſaid, *None can come to me, except it be given him of the Father*, what is that? ſee *v.* 45. *and* 37. *Reaſ.* 3.

Uſe 1. Hence ſee the reaſon, why the Word is ſo wonderfully ineffectual to the ſouls of many men, that it never ſtirs them, that it's a ſtrange thing to them; it's, *Heb.* 12. 19. like the law, *a voice of words*, a ſound of words, ſo they hear men ſpeak, but underſtand no more than if they ſpake in a ſtrange language, or if they do, it concerns not them; or if it ſtirs, 'tis but as the blowing of the wind upon a rock, which bluſters for a time; but when the wind is down they are ſtill. Truly they hear the word ſpoken, but they do not hear God ſpeaking. They heard *Latimer* ſpeak, but not God ſpeaking, they hear a ſound, *Uſe* 1.

ſound, which every one ſayes, and they think is the word, but they hear not God ſpeaking it.

One would wonder that thoſe Jews that heard *John* and his Diſciples, *Moſes* and the Prophets, nay Gods voice from heaven, ſaying, *This is my Sonne*, that they ſhould not hear this, and receive him with all their hearts, but they did not hear his voice. One would wonder to ſee, that ſuch things which a gracious heart thinks, this would draw every heart, yet main not ſtirr'd, things which the devils tremble at, and others which Angels wonder at, yet they hear not. Oh they hear not God ſpeak, they are dead in their graves, farre from God; and there they are kept by the mighty power of Satan, like one in a deep dark cave, kept by fiery dragons under the ground, and the tombſtone is laid upon them. If Chriſt ſpake he would make the dead to hear, and the blind to ſee.

Uſe 2. *Uſe* 2. Hence ſee why the Saints find ſuch changes and alterations in themſelves when they come to hear; ſometimes their hearts are quickned, fed and cheriſhed healed and comforted, relieved and viſited; ſometime again dead and ſenſeleſſe, heavy and hardned. *Mark* 8. 17, 18, 21. *How is it ye do not underſtand?* Nay which is more, that the ſame truth which they hear at one time, ſhould affect them, and at another time doth not; the ſame thing which they have heard a hundred times, and never ſtirr'd them, at laſt ſhould. The reaſon is, they heard the Word of God ſpoken at one time, but not God ſpeaking; and they heard the Lord ſpeaking that ſame Word at another time; the Lord is in his Word at one time, the Word goes alone at another time; as in *Eliah*, the Lord was not in the whirlwind, but he ſpake in the *ſtill voice*, and hence there he was to *Elijah*, *Luke* 24. 25. *with* 32. not that you are to lay blame on the Lord; for he blows where he liſteth; but to make us ſee 'tis not in outward means, nor 'tis not in our own ſpirits to quicken our ſelves; and to make us aſhamed of our own darkneſſe, that when he ſpeaks, yet we cannot hear, there is ſo much power of ſpiritual death and Satan yet within us, only out of his pitty he ſpeaks ſometimes; not that you ſhould deſpiſe the outward word; No, no, the Lord is there ſhining in Perfection of glory, and that which doth thee no good, the Lord makes powerfull to ſome others. But prize the Spirit of God

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in that Word, which alone can ſpeak to thee.

Uſe 3. Of dread and terrour to all unregenerate men. Hence ſee the heavy wrath of God againſt them: they have indeed the Scriptures, and the precious Word of God diſpenſed to them; but the Lord never ſpeakes one word unto them. If any one from whom we expect and look for love, paſſe by us and never ſpeak; What not ſpeak a word? and we call to him and he will not ſpeak, we conclude he is angry and diſpleaſed with us. You look for love, do you not? you that hear every Sabbath, and come to Lectures, and you muſt out; tis well, yes, you will ſay, *His love is better than life*, & frowns more bitter than death; Love? wo to me if the Lord do not love me, better never been born. I hope he loves me. Happy I if the mountains might fall on me, to cruſh me in pieces if he loves me not, &c. but conſider if he loves he will then ſpeak peace unſpeakable to thy conſcience when humbled, life to thy heart, joy in the Holy Ghoſt, *Iſa.* 57. 19. *John* 6. 63. 1 *Theſ.* 1. 6. but look upon thy ſoul, and ſee this day in the ſight of God, whether ever the Lord ſpake one word to thee: outwardly indeed he hath, but not inwardly; inwardly alſo, but not effectually, *to turn them from darkneſſe to light, and the power of Satan to God, &c.* The voyce of God is full of Majeſty, it ſhakes the heart; 'tis full of life, it quickens the dead, and light, and peace, and gives wiſdom to the ſimple. *Pſ.* 119. *Opening of thy word gives light to the eyes.* How many women, ever learning and never knowing, and many men learning and knowing what is ſaid, but never hear God ſpeak? Then know the wrath of the Lord, ſee and go home mourning under it. There is a fourfold wrath in this. *Uſe* 3.

1. 'Tis the Lords ſore wrath and diſpleaſure, *Zach.* 1. 2. with *verſ.* 4. If one ſhould expect love from another to do much for him, and he did not, it may be he would not take it as a ſigne of diſpleaſure: but if he will not do a ſmall thing, not ſpeak a word to him, oh this is bitter; what will not the Lord ſpeak a word, not one word, eſpecially when thy life lies on it, thy ſoul lies on it, eternity lies on it, eſpecially the Lord that is ſo merciſull and and pittifull? this is a ſign of ſore anger. 1.

2. 'Tis a token of Gods old diſpleaſure, eternall diſpleaſure; I know you cannot hear; hence though God ſpeaks, you hear him not: but why doth not 2.

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the Lord remove that deafneſſe? you old hearers, that have ears fat with hearing, but heavy, he never intended love, elſe he would ſpeak, there would be ſome time of love. *Rom.* 11. 7, 8. *The Elect have had it, others are blinded, as 'tis written, God hath given them the ſpirit of ſlumber, eyes that they ſhould not ſee, and ears that they ſhould not hear to this day.*

3. 3. 'Tis the Lords preſent diſpleaſure. When a man looks for love and ſpeech, and he doth not ſpeak at thoſe times he is not wont to ſpeak; one may take it as no ſign of anger: but when the Lord ſhall ſpeak uſually, and then he ſpeaks not, this is a ſad ſign. 1 *Sam.* 28. 6, 15. He cries out of this, *He anſwers me not by* Urim *nor dreams*, nor thee by the Goſpel nor Law, neither where he uſeth to anſwer. If this anger were to come, it were ſome comfort: but when 'tis now upon thee, even that very Sermon and Word whereby he ſpeaks to others, but not a word to thee.

4. 4. 'Tis his inſenſible anger: for a fat heart, and an heavy ear ever go together; for you will ſay, I feel no hurt in this, I have heard and been never the better, but yet that hath made me never the worſe. Oh poor creature! 'tis becauſe you feel it not; but when the time of miſery ſhall come, you will ſay, This is wo and load enough, for the Lord to give no anſwer. *Pſal.* 71. 9. *We ſee not our Prophets, nor any to tell us how long:* ſo you that deſpiſe means you ſhall then lament and ſay, none can tell how long. Oh therefore, lament this thy condition now, that the Lord may hear ſome of your cries, &c.

Uſe 4. *Uſe* 4. Hence examine whether ever you heard the Lords voice or no: not only outwardly (for that you know you have often done) but inwardly; and not only ſo, for ſo ye may do, and yet your eares heavy; but effectually, that if it be not ſo, you may be humble, and ſay, Lord how have I ſpent my time in vain? and if it be ſo, you may be thankfull, and ſay, Lord, what am I that the infinite God ſhould ſpeak to me?

There is great need of trial of this, for a man may read, hear and underſtand externally, what ever another may; and yet the whole Scripture a ſealed Book.

There are therefore theſe three degrees, by which you ſhall diſcern the effectuall voice of God, you muſt take them joyntly.

1. 1. The voice of God ſingles a man out, and (though it be

be generally written or ſpoken) ſpeaks particularly to the very heart of a man, with a marvellous kind of Majeſty and glory of God ſtamp't upon it; and ſhining in it.

When a man hears things generally delivered, the bleſſed eſtate of the Saints, the curſed eſtate of the wicked, conſolations to the one, curſes to the other, exhortations to faith and obedience, to both, and a man ſits by, and never thinks the Lord is now ſpeaking, and means me. Or if it doth ſo, yet thinks he intends me no more than others, he hears not the Lord ſpeaking; for when he ſpeaks, he ſpeaks particularly to the very heart of a man: he doth ſo fit the word to him, whether it be the Word of the law to humble him, or of Goſpel to comfort, or of command to guide, as if the Lord meant none but them.

The word is like an exact picture, it looks every man in the face that looks on it, if God ſpeaks in it, *Heb.* 4. 12, 13. *It ſearcheth the heart, verſ.* 12. but *verſ.* 13. he ſpeaks of God, how comes that in? becauſe God, the Majeſty of God comes with it when God ſpeaks it; *With whom we have to do*, why is that put in? becauſe when the Lord ſpeaks, a man thinks now I have to do with God, if I reſiſt I oppoſe a God. Before this a man thinks he hath nothing to do with God, they are ſuch ſtrangers. Hence it is one man is wrought on in a Sermon, another not. GOd hath ſingled out one, not the other that day. Hence take a man unhumbled, he hears many things, and it may be underſtands not; if ſo, yet they concern not him; if they do, and conſcience is ſtirr'd, yet they think man means them, and ſpeaks by hap, and others are as bad as they, and his trouble is not much. At laſt he hears his ſecret thoughts and ſins diſcovered, all his life is made known, and thinks 'tis the Lord verily that hath done this; now God ſpeaks, 1 *Cor.* 14. 25. thoſe things he did neither believe nor imagine; &c. *John* 4. 29. *See the man that hath told me all that ever I did.* Hence take a ſoul that is humbled, he heares of the free offer of grace, he refuſeth it; why, this is to all, and to hypocrites as well as to me. Apply any promiſe to it, it caſts by all, it looks upon them as things generally ſpoken, and applyed by man, but they hear not God ſpeaking; but when the Lord comes, he doth ſo meet with their objections, and ſpeaks what they have been thinking may be true, that they think this is the Lord, this is to me. *Hoſea* 2. 14. *I will*

ſpeak to her heart: and hence 'tis called *the ingraffed word*, James 1. 21. like one branch of many, applied to the ſtock. *Job* 33. 14, 16.

2. 2. The voice of the Lord doth not only ſpeak particularly, but it goes further; it comes not only with an Almighty power, but with a certain everlaſting efficacy and power on the ſoul. Thus 'tis here, *verſ.* 38. *Ye have not his word in you*, they had it out of them; and not only in you, but abiding in you, 1 *Pet.* 1. 23. *born of incorruptible ſeed*, the Apoſtle ſeems to ſpeak of a kind of birth by corruptible ſeed, and ſuch are like goodly flowers which ſoon wither, but you are born of incorruptible ſeed, which hath an eternall ſavour, ſweetneſſe and power. *Mat.* 13. of the four grounds three of them fall away. *John* 15. 16. Their fruit does not remain: they have ſome living affection at the preſent, but they go away and it dies. Look but upon particulars, doth the Lord once ſpeak by the Word, and humble the heart? it never lifts up its head more; doth he reveal the glory of Chriſt? that light never goes out more. *Iſa.* 60. 19. 2 *Cor.* 4. 4, 5. As at the firſt Creation, there was light, and ſo continues to this day; ſo doth he give life, *John* 11. 26. You ſhall never die more; doth he give peace and joy? no man ſhall take their joy from them. *Iſa.* 32. 17. *Fruit of Righteouſneſſe and Peace, and aſſurance for ever.* Doth he give the Spirit of all theſe, which *Gal.* 3. comes by hearing of faith? it ſhall abide for ever, *John* 14. 17.

That look as Gods love is everlaſting, ſo his words have an everlaſting excellency and efficacy in them, and goodneſs in them, the ſweeteſt token of his love: and as Chriſts purchaſe is only of eternall good things; ſo the application of this purchaſe by the Word, 'tis of eternall worth: peace, but peace eternal; life, light, favour, joy, but joy eternal; like Muſtard ſeed, though very little, yet mighty in increaſe, and never ſubdued again; ſo that though it be but little, yet 'tis eternal: and hence obſerve where God hath ſpoken effectually, the longer the man lives, the more he grows in the vertue and power of the word; another though wonderfully raviſhed for a time, yet dies, moſt commonly outwardly in external Profeſſion, but ever in inward ſavour; ſo that when you hear the word, and it moves you, affects you, and *John is a burning light, and you rejoyce therein, but 'tis but for a ſeaſon.* The evill Spirit comes on you, and *David* plays upon

upon his Harp, and Miniſters preach ſweet things, but as ſoon as the Muſick is done, the evill Spirit returns, I ſay you never heard the Lords voyce. The peace and joy of the Lord enters into Eternity, and the Apoſtle expreſſly cals him an unfruitfull hearer, *James* 1. 24 *that ſees his face and forgets himſelf.* A gracious heart can ſay, This peace ſhall go to heaven; and joy, and love, and fear, it's part of eternall glory.

3. The voyce of the Lord comes not only thus particularly, and with eternal efficacy, but with ſuch efficacy as carries unto, and centers in Chriſt; ſo 'tis here: *For him whom God hath ſent, you believe not. John 6. 41. They ſhall be taught of God:* where in doth that appear? *they ſhall hear, and learn ſo as to come to me*; if the law humbles them, it's ſuch a humbling as drives them unto Chriſt, poor and undon, *Rom* 10. 4. if the word gives peace to them, 'tis ſuch a peace, which at the laſt they find in Chriſt, *Eph.* 2. 17, 18. with 14. if it live holily, it lives unto Chriſt, not meerly as to God, and to quiet conſcience, unto a Creator, as *Adam*, but for Chriſts ſake. 2 *Cor.* 5. 14. 15. *We judge that if we were dead, and Chriſt dyed for us, we ſhould then live unto him*; if they grow up by the word, 'tis in Chriſt, *Eph.* 4. 14. though Chriſt be not mentioned, yet it is ſtrange to ſee, let the word ſpeak what it will, whether terrour, Oh my need of Chriſt! mercy and grace; Oh the love of Chriſt! oh the blood of Chriſt! command; oh that I may live to honour Chriſt, and wrong him no more! Duties; Oh the eaſie yoke of Chriſt! They look upon the whole word rightly diſpenſed as the bridegrooms voice, and truly his words are ſweet. 3.

For a man may have ſome ſuch fear, reformation, affection, as may continue, but never carry him out of himſelf unto Chriſt. The Phariſees knew the law, were very exact even till their death, profited as *Paul* ſaid he did; yet they had not the word abiding in them; becauſe not driven out of themſelves to Chriſt, to reſt there.

Hence when men ſhall hear many things, but to what end do you hear, or what vertue have the things you hear? Do they only pleaſe fancy for a time? or do you hear to increaſe your knowledge & parts; or do you hear for cuſtome and company, and to quiet conſcience? or are you affected and ſunk, but not driven by all to lay thy head on Chriſt? the Lord never ſpake yet to thee; when the word hath laid you on this foundation, truly it's office

is done and ended, Gods end is now attained, &c.

Oh try your ſelves here, have you heard, but never heard the voyce of the Lord, ruſhing upon thee with Majeſty, ſpeaking to thy heart, and the very ſecrets of it, but have ſaid, This is for others, and when you have thought the man hath ſpoken to you, your hearts have then ſwollen againſt him? or have you thus heard, but all dies and withers like flowers? the ſame heart ſtill, or have you had ſome powerfull ſtroke which remains, but it forceth you not out of your ſelves to Chriſt, there to reſt, there to joy, there to live, there to die? truly your time hath been ſpent in vain, you never yet heard the Lord ſpeak. Oh mourn for it, thou art ſtill in thy blood, if he never ſaid Live; in thy bondage, if the Lord never ſaid, Come forth. This is the condition of many to be lamented with tears. But if thou haſt thus heard particularly, and though but little light, life and peace, yet it is of eternal efficacy, and all to draw thee to Chriſt; then bleſſe the Lord: *For bleſſed are your ears that hear*, and I ſay as *Moſes* ſaid, *Deut.* 4. 32. *Ask, if ever People heard God ſpeaking and live.* The Apoſtle, *Heb.* 12. 24. makes it a greater matter to come to hear God on *Mount Sion*, and yet live; Bleſſed be God I live.

Object. *Obj.* But may not many of the Saints hear, & hear the Lord ſpeak; but not feel this everlaſting power and efficacy?

Anſw. 1. *Anſw.* I would not lay a foundation of unthankfulneſſe, nor diſcourage any; and therefore, note for anſwer theſe particulars.

1. 1. There may be an eternal efficacy of the Word, and yet lye hid, and not felt for a time. The Word is compared, you know, to ſeed, and that in this reſpect; the ſeed it is caſt under the clod in the winter-time, and it hath a vertue in it to grow; but it is hid, and comes not to blade, of a good while, and when it doth blade, yet it bears not fruit of a long time: So here, the Lord may caſt the ſeed of his Word into the heart; but it is hidden for a time, it is not felt as yet, but there it is; a word of threatning, a word of promiſe, a word of Command; a man may caſt it by, and ſay, *It* belongs not to me; a man may ſlight the command for a time: Yet notwithſtanding, the Lord having caſt his ſeed into the heart, it ſhall ſpring up. As many a child, the father ſpeaks to it, and applies the word home to it, when it is of ſome years, the child regards it not: But now ſtay ſome time,

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till the Lord do bring it into ſome ſad affliction; now a man begins to think, I remember what my Father ſpake to me once, and I regarded it not then: Now this ſeed which was caſt when the child was young, it ſhall ſpring up twenty years after. *John* 2. 22. Chriſt had ſaid, *He would deſtroy the Temple, and raiſe it again in three dayes*: Now *when he was riſen from the dead, his diſciples remembred that which he had ſpoken to them*, but they regarded it not before; *Theſe things*, ſaith Chriſt, *have I ſpoken to you whiles I was with you; but when the comforter is come, he ſhall bring all theſe words to your remembrance that I have ſaid unto you*. One ſentence it may be that hath diſcovered a mans ſin, it lies hid; but when the time of ripening draws near, you ſhal ſee the word will have marvelous increaſe; and that ſin it may be will bring to mind twenty ſins; and that promiſe of God which gives but a little conſolation, conſider'd in it ſelf, it ſhall give marvelous conſolation. One would wonder to ſee what one word will do, when the Lords time of bleſſing it is come.

2. After that a Chriſtian hath had the feeling of the efficacy of the word, he may loſe the feeling of it again, and yet the being of it may remain; and the reaſon is this, partly becauſe there is not alwayes need of feeling the like efficacy in the word. A man may have by the word a marvelous deal of aſſurance of Gods love, and ſenſe of mercy and joy in the holy Ghoſt, he may have this in the feeling of it: This word, it did lye hid for a time; afterward it ſprings up and gives him peace. But he loſes his peace again, his Sun do's ſet, and it is midnight with with him within twenty four hours, and he is as much in the dark as before; Now the being of this peace is there, but he hath no need of the feeling of it at all times; the Lord he will reſerve that till ſome time of tentation, that he ſhall meet withall. As *Paul*, he had marvellous Revelations; but *Paul* had more need of humiliation, than exaltration; and there was not that uſe of *Pauls* having thoſe glorious manifeſtations to him; *I will glory in my infirmities*: There was need for *Paul* to know the evils of his heart, that he might walk humbly; and it did not make ſo much for the glory of the Lord, as this, that *Paul* ſhould ſay, I have this miſery and darkneſs, and ſins, and yet Jeſus Chriſt he will take away all: There was not need for *Paul* to have thoſe joyes at all times, that he had at one time. So the Lord he gives a Chriſtian joy

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and peace, now there is no need for a Christian to have it alwayes. *I will pour floods of water on dry ground:* Beloved, if there should be nothing but rain, rain every day and night, the ground would be glutted with rain, and so turned into a puddle; but when the land is dry and thirsty, now the ground hath need of rain: Let the Earth make use of that rain it hath: and when it is dry and thirsty, I will give more, saith the Lord. So the Lord he gives the soul joy and peace; Now, if it should continue, the very peace and joy of God, would not be pleasant to the soul; or at least, not so pleasant as it will be, when the Lord takes it away, and gives it the soul again. A Christians comes to the meeting-house, and the Lord fills the sailes of a poor soul, that he wonders the Lord should meet him, and speak so suitably to him: But as soon as he is gone out again, this is the complaint of the soul, all is lost again; now the soul it sals a mourning again. It is not for the glory of God to give the soul such peace out of his Ordinances, as he doth in them; the soul it would not prize the Ordinances of the Lord so much; yet there it is; and when they come again, the Lord, he either gives them the same refreshings again, or else there is a new spring.

3. 3. The eternall efficacy of the word and voyce of God; it may be preserved in an internall spirit of prayer, for the continuance of it while he hath it, and for the return of it when it is lost. *Psalm.* 119. 4, 5. *Thou hast commanded us to keep thy precepts diligently. David* he knew his own weakness; yet he intimates with what power it came on his heart: *Oh that my soul were directed to keep thy statutes*; When the soul sees the beauty of a command, and the good will of God, how sweet it is, and how amiable the way and work of God is; *Oh that my heart were directed to keep thy statutes.* And so when it is gone, *Psal.* 63. 3. *My soul thirsteth after thee, Lord*, saith *David*, that *I may see thy glory and power, as I have seen thee in thy sanctuary.* He doth not say, that I may see thy glory and power in thy sanctuary, though that might be too, no, but *that I may see thy glory and power, as I have seen thee in thy sanctuary. David* he did find a want of seeing him as he had done; yet the vertue of it did remain in a spirit of thirsting, and desire: *My soul thirsteth for thee, as in a dry land where no water is, that I may see thee.* A Christian may have at some time such a glimpse (in hearing

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the word) of Gods grace, of the exceeding riches of Gods grace, and the love of God to him, that he may be in a little heaven at that time; raviſhed in the admiration of that mercy, that ever God ſhould look to him. It is ſo, and the word ſayes ſo, and the ſoul is raviſhed with wonderment at it; yet God is gone again, and the ſoul loſes it. Now the ſoul thinks, I have loſt the efficacy of Gods word, but it is not ſo; for thus it may be preſerved. Oh that I may ſee this God as I have done: And all his life-time the ſoul may find the want of this, & yet it may be preſerved in a ſpirit of prayer. For whem the Lord hath given once a glimpſe of his glory; the ſoul it cannot be at reſt, but it breatheth for more of that mercy and preſence; a Chriſtian may find his ſpirit marvellouſly refreſhed at the word, he may taſte how good the Lord is, and he may loſe it again: but this may be preſerved in a ſpirit of longing after this God, and preſence again. And I will ſay this, Brethren, A Chriſtian may find no good by the word to his apprehenſion; he ſees the admirable bleſſed eſtate of the Saints, and exceeding riches of God in Chriſt, ſees the ſweetneſs of the waies of God; goes home & thinks within himſelf, Happy they that are in this condition: Bleſſed are they that can walk thus with God; But I cannot, ſaith the ſoul. I ſay it may find it thus, when he cannot find the reall efficacy of the word as he would do; he may receive the benefit of that word, if the Lord do but only give him a heart to deſire it. Oh that the Lord would but thus manifeſt himſelf to me; the ſoul may go away poor and hungry from the word, and the Lord may yet reſerve a ſpirit of thirſting after that good which a man deſires to find; and there is the efficacy of the word there.

As now there are two golden veſſels; one a man fills, and it is every day dropping, and he preſerves it; another veſſel he do's not fill, but with ſomthing that he hath, He is every day widening of it. So ſome Chriſtians, the Lord he's a filling of them; others, the Lord he do's not fill them with ſuch peace and joy; ay, but though the Lord is not filling of them, he is a widening of them: there is ſuch a vertue that the Lord do's enlarge the heart with ſecret deſires and longings after more of Gods grace, and Chriſts: The Lord he ſaith, I intend to make this man a veſſell of glory; and I intend he ſhall have a great deal of glory and peace at the laſt. The Lord he leaves

such an impression of the word upon him, as that thereby he enlargeth the heart; *Open thy mouth wide, & I will fill it.*

4. A Christian may have the everlasting efficacy of the word and voice of God preserved in a spirit of thankfulnesse and love to the Lord, for those joys, and good that it finds by the word sometimes. When it feels that the sweet and savour of the word is gone, a spirit of thankfulnesse and love to the word that doth remain; The Lord he preserves the efficacy of the word in this way. *Psal.* 119. 7. *I shall,* saith *David, then praise thee with uprightnesse of heart, when I shall have learned thy righteous judgements.* The Lord he may teach his people his righteous judgements; and the savour and feeling, and strength of them to their feeling may be gone, and yet it is preserved in a spirit of thankfulnesse and praise, that ever the Lord should shew it such mercy. When the Spirit is gone, the spirit of love and thankfulnesse remains. As now a man hath heard the word, the Lord he hath effectually wrought on him, and changed his heart, and drawn him to himself; a Christian it may be he may lose those sorrows and humiliations, and the remembrance of those things; yet there remaineth to his dying day this Spirit, he blesseth God, and wondereth at God, that ever he should make the word effectuall; that he should leave so many thousands in the world, and cast his skirt over him, and say to him, Live; this do's remain still. 4.

Brethren, the Lord do's sometimes let light into a mans mind to discover his sin: now this light it do's not sensibly overcome the power of sin: But now the soul blesseth God for that word which hath convinced it; had I never seen my sin, saith the soul, I should never a sought for power against it, and pardon of it; and this continues now, and cannot but continue; here is the efficacy of the word, the word of Gods grace; though the flower of it be gone, yet there is an eternal power of the word; that the soul can say, It hath come to me, and helped me against these sins; and the soul wonders at the Lord, it should be so much as it is. So again, a Christian he finds marvellous refreshings and affection whiles he is a hearing; when he is gone away, he finds not the same, but he blesseth God for those affections he finds, and there remains an eternall efficacy of the word.

5. The eternall efficacy of the word, it may be and is preserved, by nourishing, increasing and restoring the 5.

now

new man that is eternall. There is a double efficacy that the word hath; the first is to beget a Christian to life, and this new man is eternall. I conceive all the actions of the new man may be suspended, and the increasings of the new creature may be decayed, though God doth renew it again: But this never do's decay, it never dies: *He that is born of God cannot sin, because he is born of God; and because the seed of God remains in him.*

2. There is efficacy in the word when it hath begotten a man to nourish him up; and so the word it is food to him, that was seed to him to beget him, which food is eternall. How is it eternal? Is it in this, that now the sweetnesse, savour and remembrance of every thing that doth refresh him, shall last in it self? No, but in this respect it is eternall, in that it leaveth its secret vertue in the nourishing of that which is eternall. As now *Adam* when he was in innocency, and had an immortall body, his food it should have been an immortall food to him; but how should that have been? should he alwayes have had the same strength, from the same diet, which he ate long before? No, but in this respect it should have been an immortall food to him, in that it was to nourish that which was to be eternal: So it is here, the word of Gods grace it begets a man, it humbles a man, and draws the soul to Christ; but afterwards, there are many things that God speaks to the soul in the word, that hath an eternall vertue, in that it doth nourish up the new creature; the word hath a secret vertue in it for this end. I wil shew it you thus; *Isa.* 58. 11. The Lord he professes to his people thy soul shal be as a water'd garden, the Lord wil make the souls of his people like watered gardens, in peace, and joy, and life. Now look as if so be Trees by water or by some springs that run by it, and slide away, and ye cannot tell, which it is that makes them to grow; yet ye know this, there is in all of them joyned together, a secret insensible vertue; that every one of them addes something to the flourishing of the Tree: So it is here, the Saints of God, the word of God it comes to them, and passes by them; and ye cannot tell whether this part or that part of the word leave any vertue, but many times a man feels no vertue; yet it is manifest, here is a flourishing Christian, here is heart, and life, and peace that it hath with God, and the soul it remains flourishing; there is a secret vertue, all the words that run by and passe by the souls of

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Gods people, they do leave a marvellous vertue, to make the ſoules of Gods people like watered gardens, and to increaſe in grace. Note it by the way you that live under the means of grace, *your ſouls ſhall be like watered gardens*; if God have ſpoken to you firſt or laſt, the Lord ſpeaks many times to you, ſometimes affecting, and ſometimes warning, ſometimes convincing and humbling, and ſpeaking Peace, and there is a vertue that remaines, and if ye find it not, know that God hath not ſpoken to you.

6. 6. The eternall efficacy of the word may be preſerved in a power of Conflict againſt the power of ſin: for therein the Lords power of the Word does principally appear in this life, though not in a power of victory, I mean a compleat victory, yet an imperfect and incompleat victory, there ever is firſt or laſt, where ever there is a power of Conflict. I mean thus, the Word it ſingles a man out, and ſpeaks to his heart, & ſets him at variance with his ſin, and with himſelf for his ſin, and he joynes ſide with God in the uſe of all meanes, that his unbeliving heart and proud Spirit may be ſubdued; it ſets him at variance with his ſin; now there is many a Chriſtian thinks there is no power of the Word: oh my unbelief continues ſtill and my vain mind, and I can find little ſtrength; no, ye muſt not look for a power of compleat victory, but yet there is a power of Conflict; God he ſets the ſoul at an everlaſting diſtance with his ſin, never to be reconciled, and looks to the Lord, that by his Word and Spirit he would ſubdue them, that ſo he may ſee the death of them, & he ſides with the Lord in the uſe of all meanes, comes to the Word, and comes to Prayer, and ſayes, Speak againſt my ſin, Lord; Lord, waſte theſe diſtempers; & ſo the ſoul is thus at variance with his ſin, although his temptations do grow in and hill of him, he goes again, and to them again: and though he periſheth, and never have mercy from the Lord, yet, Lord, that I may never ſin againſt thee more, help therefore, Lord, by this promiſe, and mercy and means, and here he keeps him, and here he holds. Truly, brethren, here is an eternall vertue, and ſuch a vertue as no hypocrites have, that have ſome ſting of conſcience, and after they have ſome peace, they are at truce with their ſins. No, there is an everlaſting conflict and warfare, and I do aſſure you there is an everlaſting power gone forth. *Mat.* 12. 20. *Chriſt*

will

will not break the bruised reeed, nor quench the smoaking flax, till judgement come to victory; Therefore there may be judgement, but it may not come to victory, there may be smoak and fire, and it may almost go out, and the Lord he blowes it up again, and at the last, though it be weak and little, and he think with himself he shall never get strength again, yet the Lord will give victory in his time.

Only be cautious here; I told you there is an incompleat victory, the Lord never sets his people at variance with their sin, but they have victory, but it's an incompleat victory; Saith the Lord, *I will drive out the Hittites, and Canaanites, and Perizzites before you, but I will do it by little and little.* There is many a Christian that findes within himself a Spirit of warfare against his sin, and did he examin himself, he should find a Spirit of victory; but hee thinkes he hath none because his victory is not compleat. If he had a heart so to believe as never to doubt more, and such quickning as never to be dead more, never to depart from God more, now I should think the Word comes with power; but *I* find that these evils prevaile against me. There is many a one does scorn the kindnesse of Christ, because he finds not compleat victory, but darknesse remaines still, and sinfull lusts remain still, therefore the Word doth me no good at all, saith he. The Lord he hath given thee a Spirit of Conflict, and hath set thee at an everlasting distance with thy sin, and he doth give thee some victory. Beloved, a Christian may decay in the power of the grace of Christ, which he hath received from the Word, and voice of God in the Word, and he may decay, and grow to a very low estate; yet he shall find this, the Word of the Lord hath come with power to him, it will recover his soul again, and so the efficacy of the Word is eternall. *Psalm.* 72. its said of Christ, that *his People shall fear him so long as Sun and Moon shall endure*, that is, continually, all their life-time. It may be said, there be many that find decay of their service and obedience, and lose their fear of the Lord, and their dread, and their humble walking before him. *He shall come as the rain on the mowen grasse*: many times a Christian hath his flourishing time as the grasse, but when the grasse is mowen, it is as a dry chip; so the soul it may grow dry, as dry as a chip. Now where is your sap and savour? but I tell you, if you belong

to

to the Lord Jesus, the rain it will fall again, the Word of God set on by the Spirit of Christ, it shall fall upon you as the rain on the mowen grasse, and you know that it recovers little by little, and puts on a green coat again. Here is the eternal love of the Lord Jesus to his People, and thus the eternal efficacy of the word does continue.

Vse 3. 3. *Vse* is of exhortation. Oh Brethren and beloved in the Lord Jesus, may a Christian hear the Word of God spoken, and yet never hear God speak? may he hear it externally and not internally? then rest not in externall hearing, and with some little movings, and affections, and stirrings of the Word of Gods grace in hearing. Let not the Word be to you as the sound of many waters, and a noise, no efficacy of the Word that do remain on your soules. Brethren and beloved in Christ, *I* lay my finger on the sore in these times. Oh the contempt of the Gospel of Christ, though I believe it hath its efficacy in the heart of the Elect: that is the thing that I presse, never be content with external hearing, though thou mayest have some affection, and know new things, unlesse thou find the Lord speaking with an eternall efficacy to thy soul. I conceive two things are to be done, that the word may come with an everlasting efficacy; although something is to be done by Ministers; that is, to preach truth, and Gospel-truth, fetch't from heaven with many prayers, & soaked truth with many tears. *Ye shall know the truth, & that truth shal make you free.* Convicting truth. *We preach,* saith the Apostle, *in the demonstration of the Spirit. The Spirit of God when he commeth, he convinceth the world of sin.* Let Ministers do so. Preach convincing truth and Gospel-truth, fetch'd from heaven, and bathed in tears. Oh brethren, let the fire burn clear, let there not be more smoak than fire, it will never come with power then; convincing Gospel-truth, set on by the demonstration of the Spirit of the Lord, and this will set a Christian at liberty; there is never such a Sermon that the faithful ones of God preach to you; if it come not with a power to loosen you and call you home; it comes with a power to blind you: it is *an ax at the root of the Trees*; but I leave this. What means ought the people to use, that the Word of God may come with efficacy?

Them that are in their unregenerate estate, the Lord only knows how to work on their hearts; they must come to the outward means: I speak to the Saints of God,

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I leave others to the infinite mercy of the Lord; *It is not in him that willeth or runneth, but in the Lord that sheweth mercy.* In the use of means.

1. Means. Do not only see thy infirmities and weaknesses, but pray to God to give thee a heart bleeding under the sense of thy many infirmities. Many times men slight them, and are not sensible of them; *I* do not say wickednesses and wilfulnesses, but thy infirmities and weaknesses, get a heart mourning under them. A Christian is made up of infirmities and weaknesses, a man would not think there is that in another, which he knows by himself. Oh brethren, labour for a broken heart in the sense of your many infirmities and weaknesses, darkness and enmity, vanity and unsavourinesse, the Lord will have his time to speak to such a soul. *Break up the fallow ground of your hearts,* —— *lest my wrath break out with fire*: the Lord hath promised *to dwell with the poor and contrite.* Look as it was with our Saviour Christ, they brought the sick and the lame ones to him, and vertue went out from Christ to heal them all. Bring thy sick and blind heart to Christ, and vertue shall go forth from Christ to heal it. 1.

2. Draw near to God in the Word, by looking on it as God speaking to thee. We are far from God, and therefore we cannot hear him: draw near to him when you come to the external Word, when you come to hear the Word, hear it as the voyce of God; *You heard the Word as the Word of God*, which you felt in you. I do not speak that the soul should take every thing that Ministers speak as the Word of God, but that which is the Word of God, take it as God speaking. I am not able to expresse the infinite unknown sweetnesse, and mercy, and presence of God, that you shall find thus comming. I know it is a common truth, but I am not ashamed to tell you, I have not for many a year understood this truth, and I see but little of it yet; ye have heard of it, but ye do not understand what it is to hear God speaking. When God hath an intent to harden a mans heart and to damn him, either he shall have a prejudice against the man, or else if he hath not a prejudice against the man, there is a secret loathing of the truth, in regard of the commands of it, and that is all, and the Lord he hardens, and blinds, and prepares for eternall ruin, all the men in the world by this means, that live 2. 1 *Thes.* 2:3.

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under the means. When the Lord ſpake to *Samuel*, *Samuel* heard a voyce, but he heard it not as ſpoken by God, but when he took *Elies* counſel, and ſaw it was the Lord that ſpoke; now he liſtens to the voice of the Lord, and now the Lord opens all his mind to him.

3. Do not truſt to the external word. *It* is a heaven on earth to hear the word exalted, a glorious thing to hear the word of God as Gods word; but truſt to the free grace of God in it, and the Spirit of God in Chriſt to ſet on that Word. When they brought the lame, and blind, and halt to Chriſt, they looked for the Word and the Power of it; *Speak the Word, Lord, and thy ſervants ſhall be whole*; ſo bring you blind, lame, and halt ſouls to Chriſt, and truſt to the free grace of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. *The Work of the Lord it ſhall proſper in his hand*; ſo the Word of the Lord it ſhall proſper in his hand alſo.

Laſtly, ſo ſeek the Lord, and ſo hear the Word, ſo ſee the truth, and ſo hear the truth, as that you lay up your happineſſe in this world, in cloſing with the truth and with the word. Brethren, what is a mans happineſs in heaven, but to cloſe with God and Chriſt? *I* cannot come to God now, the moſt that *I* can have of God now is in his word; if it be happineſs in heaven to cloſe with God in Chriſt, truly then it is a mans happineſſe to cloſe with God in his word on earth; and if it be your happineſs, lay up your happineſs in it. *My ſon*, ſaith Solomon, *if thou wilt hear my words, let them not depart from thine eies; keep them in thy middeſt of thy heart*; place thy happineſs in them. So *ſhall they be life to thy ſoul.* Nevertheleſſe Brethren, let a mans ſoul be ſet upon any thing in the world, when he comes to hear, beſides the word; if he lay not up his happineſſe in cloſing with the word; truly, the word it will be like a ſong to him. The Prophet *Ezekiel* tells them, *Their hearts were gone after their covetouſneſs*: When a man comes to hear a Sermon, there is a Sermon and the Market, there is a Sermon and a friend to ſpeak withall; and ſo many young people will go abroad to hear Sermons; What is the end of it? *It* is, that yee may get wives and husbands many of you; but it is not your bleſſedneſſe to cloſe with the Lord in his word. *I* have known ſome men that have had a diſtaſte againſt the truth of the Lord; and *I* have known them for many a day, they have not bee able to underſtand the truth of the Lord. When it ſhall be thus with a man,

Prov. 3. Verſ. 22.

that

that a mans heart is set on ſomething elſe beſides the word of the Lord, that it is not my happineſſe to cloſe with the truth of the Lord; ſuch a man ſhall never underſtand the truth of the Lord. Though the word be ſweet to you ſometimes, if your bleſſedneſſe do not lye in this, to enjoy God; Oh this Goſpel of God, and theſe Commands of God, that your bleſſedneſſe do not lye in cleaving to the Lord in his word; *I* ſay, it is a certain truth, you ſhall be blinded and harned by the word: For here is a Rule; Whatſoever a mans heart is ſet on, as his chiefeſt good, the preſence of that good it comes with power: So here, the precious Goſpell of Chriſt, when the preſence of it commands the heart, nothing is good enough for it, and it cloſeth with it, and with Chriſt in it.

I beſeech you therefore, Beloved in Chriſt, ſet upon the uſe of theſe meanes, think within your ſelves, What if the Lord had left me without the word? *I* will tell you what ye would have been. Look upon theſe poor *Indians*, herds of Beaſts; look upon others on their Ale-benches, enemies to the Lord, ſuch a one thou hadſt been.

This bleſſed word and voyce of God, every tittle of it coſt the blood of Chriſt; written all the lines of it in the blood of Chriſt. Oh, make much of it, and it will make much of you; it will comfort you, and ſtrengthen you, and revive you; & if the word come not with power, ye ſhall be under the power of ſomething elſe; if not under the power of the word, then under the power of ſome luſt. What is the reaſon that theſe poor creatures, that are come to the tryall for life and death, that have fallen into ſuch ſinnes as were never heard of? What is the reaſon that they are under the power of their luſts? *I* will tell you what *Solomon* ſaith, *My ſon, if wiſdome enter into thy heart, and diſcretion be pleaſant to thy ſoul, it ſhall keep thee from the ſtrange woman*, and ſinful companion. If it be pleaſant, here is the reaſon, the word of Gods grace it never came with power, or if it came with power, powerleſs the word of Gods grace hath been to them; and becauſe it hath not come with power, the Lord hee hath given them over to the power of their luſts, and ſinfull diſtempers. Oh Brethren, truly *I* cannot ſee how any man can maintain any evidence of Gods electing love, that ſhall hear and

hear,

[illegible] efficacy is not known to him, neither doth he mourn for the want of it; but the eternall efficacy thereof is a stranger to him. 1 *Thes.* 1. 5. *Knowing*, saith the Apostle, *your Election of God*; How did he know it? For, saith he, *Our Gospel came not to you in word, but in power*; ye will rejoyce the hearts of your Ministers, when the word comes with power. Let me say this, and so I conclude.

I remember the Lords threatning; *I will take away the staffe of bread, and ye shall eat, and shall not be satisfied*; When the Lord shall let men have the word, when the Lord shall not take away the word, but the staffe of the word. Suppose you poor Parents, Fathers, and Mothers, your Families should have good Corn, but when you come to eat it, no strength at all, but ye dye and wear away; and others that are about you, they have planted the same Corn, and eat and are satisfied; What will ye do in this case? You would set apart a day of fasting and prayer, and say, Good Lord, what a curse is upon me? my poor children are dying before me, others have the staffe of Corn; but my Family have no strength at all. Ye would mourn if it were thus with your poor Cattell. Oh, for poor Creatures to have the word, but the efficacy of it to be taken away; no blessing, no power at all. Oh poor Creatures, go and say! Oh the curse of God that lies on me, the wrath of God that lyes on my servants, it is a heavy plague. But Oh the sweetnesse and excellency of it, when a Christian shall find everlasting vertue and efficacy conveyed to him by the word.

All you [illegible] before the Lord this day, ye shall see an end of all perfection; but eternall things are not they worth something? You shall see an end of all delights and contentments; but this shall comfort you when you are a dying, what [illegible] and which you attended upon the Lord in, such [illegible] and such consolations I have found by it; and the efficacy of that word then remaines with you; nay, goes to heaven with you. *I commend you therefore to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up unto an everlasting inheritance amongst them that are sanctified*, Acts 20. 32.

FINIS.

